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⑥ MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS.

BY

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⑪ JUN 1979

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

→ This study focuses

The focus of this study is on the professional ethical conduct of the U.S. Armed Forces officer. The problem is defined as the gap between what military officers actually perceive to be the behavior of their fellow officers and the ethical standard of performance expected of the profession. The professional military ethic is defined as the set of expectations for behavior that is commonly understood and generally accepted by the military profession. These expectations are derived from the trust and confidence vested in the profession by the nation and from the traditional and developing values necessary to fulfillment of the unique military mission. Although there is general acceptance among officers of the basic value concepts of military professionalism, the difficulty comes in applying those values to the exigencies of the environment in which the military officer serves. → (cont on p. iv)

Many prevailing views of the causes of the perceived problem of professional ethical conduct are concerned with such culprits as shifting morality, civilianization, and entrepreneurialism. Such views are either overly simplistic or misleading in explaining the sources of the problem. A more adequate understanding of the ethics problem must be sought in an examination of the relationship of the professional officer to the military organization, the relationship of the military profession to American society, and the role of the individual

officer qua individual. The conduct of the officer in the military organization is affected by changes in the societal and military environments, certain strains arising from his dual roles as professional officer and career bureaucrat, and the ethical climate created in the organization itself. The officer is further influenced by certain inherent strains between the military and society, manifestations of the profession's pursuit of the "military way" vs. "militarism," and his interpretation of the military profession's purpose and place in society. Finally, the analysis rests upon the professional officer himself--his personal integrity, sense of dedication, and understanding of his responsibility for setting the example for subordinates and for not tolerating unethical practices among his fellow officers.

The remedial solution to the ethics problem cannot be found in quick measures or a few courses in the service schools. The program proposed in this study involves a broad, comprehensive approach that begins with the individual professional officer. The approach seeks to foster clarification of professional standards, awareness of ethical issues confronting the profession, and comprehension of the problem of putting ethical concepts into practice. On the organizational level, the program seeks to influence the leadership and organizational environment that affects professional behavior. This is accomplished by addressing the ethical climate set by command emphasis and policies, the professional commitment instilled in officers, and accommodating mechanisms to ameliorate

professional/bureaucratic strains. Finally, the program advocates efforts to clarify issues of professional purpose, ideology and ethics in order to help the officer maintain a sense of dedication and justice about pursuing the profession of arms and a feeling that he is understood and appreciated by the public. *(cont A p. ii)*

This study examines
The result of this study is not a recipe for curing the alleged ethics problem. It is a comprehensive examination into the strains and influences that will always be present to discourage ethical conduct. It seeks understanding of the nature of the problem and *the* resolve within the profession to rise above the pressures of organizational life and renew the spirit and standards traditional to the military profession. *P*

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MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is significant concern within the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps regarding the current level of professionalism and the status of ethical behavior among their respective officer corps. This concern involves no mere lip service to a set of ideals or platitudes. It has been manifested over the past decade in a great many military journals and books, through conferences, memoranda, and commentaries, and, most significantly, in the responses to a number of surveys of military officers. Some note a serious erosion of traditional values within the military profession; some even forecast an impending crisis in, or disintegration of, the profession. Others see a challenge of rapidly changing conditions for which the profession must readapt its value system. Areas of concern include the vices of careerism, false reporting, cover-ups, misguided loyalties, managerial incompetence and many other indicators of a lack of commitment to the ethical standards of the military profession.

Whether or not there truly has been an erosion of values within the military profession, there is no doubt about the existence of considerable concern. Although some portion of the officer corps may remain complacent to the existence of a problem, others have become aware, and even indignant, that

something must be done to rectify what is perceived to be the problem. If there is indeed an ethics problem within the military profession, certainly we must act to cure it. However, we must not rush headlong onto uncertain ground. Genuine concern for ethical standards of the profession must not lead us into a misguided "instant ethics" approach to "do something" about a problem we do not even fully understand. Nearly every service school recently has introduced or expanded courses and seminars on ethics; some operational units are contemplating commanders' calls to discuss the topic; and considerable staff work has been initiated to find solutions within military organizations.

While the majority of these efforts are laudatory and promising, there is a distinct connotation that the "cure" is to create a sudden awareness of "the problem" or to inculcate a set of higher standards among a target audience. The shortcoming is that so often there is a lack of understanding of the problem itself, coupling with overly simplistic approaches, e.g., beliefs in single causation of actually complex problems, adherence to "pet" solutions, and blaming the problem on such scapegoats as "them," society, technology, management, etc. These approaches could be futile or even counterproductive when based on a flawed comprehension of the problem. Yet, there remains a distinct lack of consensus about what the problem really is, what is the cause of it, and what can be done about it.

The subject of ethics is fraught with difficulties of sensitivity, morality, controversy and opinion. It is difficult to

narrow the concern as it has roots in individual behavior, organizational values, tradition, culture, law and the nature of war. Yet, there is no doubt about the importance of ethical standards both to the institutional requirements of the military profession and to the self-esteem of professional officers. One would like to cut through the difficulties and confusion that surround these issues and arrive at a coherent explication of exactly what causes ethical or unethical behavior and what must be done to ensure the desired standards of professional conduct. Unfortunately, such a goal is not achievable; there are no concrete answers. Yet, we can still seek insights into the complex array of issues that govern ethical conduct within the military profession with the aim of developing a realistic approach to fostering the kind of professional behavior we expect within the officer corps.

The purpose of this study is to shed some light on the complex issues of military professionalism and ethics by addressing the questions: What is the problem? What is the cause of it?, and what can be done about it if there really is a problem? The objective is not to find the answers or to come up with the right solutions or even to suggest that the ideal can ever be achieved. It is, rather, to promote a deeper level of understanding of the ethical dimensions of military professionalism and the vast interplay of issues that affect professional conduct; then to outline a suggested program to foster the professional ethics we expect of ourselves as military officers.

In approaching the study of this complex and evasive issue, I have consulted experts. They are the large body of active duty and retired officers, as well as concerned civilians, who have devoted considerable thought, research and soul-searching to problems of the military profession. Many of them have contributed to the amazing number of articles and books providing valuable insights and diverse range of viewpoints on issues of professionalism and ethics. Many others are commanders, staff officers and instructors at service schools who currently are highly attuned to the many ethical dilemmas within the military profession and are grappling with the complexities of the problems involved. I have consulted with a great number of these individuals and reviewed the military-related literature, as well as the rapidly growing body of studies among other professions and businesses dealing with similar ethical concerns. Both in the literature and in interviews I found a wide array of opinions about ethics in the military, along with a great many honest confessions of uncertainty about the problems involved. Quite often, the most knowledgeable experts on professionalism and ethics admitted that the more they investigate the issues, the less certain about potential solutions. The problem is that there are many uncertainties about human behavior and contradictions among the individual and organizational demands.

Another interesting set of responses I received came from the readers of my first draft. Many highlighted a particular

section and said, "There you've hit on the real problem. All the rest is secondary." The point is that most were identifying different parts of the study, thus illustrating the fact that there are many different aspects to this issue and many different views of what affects it.

I have endeavored to explore the issues of military professionalism and ethics in sufficient depth to broaden the perspectives within the services of the many factors impinging upon a subject that affects all professional military officers. I certainly have not covered all the dimensions of the problem, as the list could go on forever touching every aspect of the military and the lives of its officers. However, I have tried to cover those aspects that most directly affect the ethical climate of the military profession. I have not attempted to provide the final word or to give the answer to every potential problem of ethics. Rather, I hope to foster a deeper level of understanding of the ethical dimensions of military professionalism and to stimulate the concern, debate and attitudes within the officer corps through which the only real improvement can come.

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY ETHICS

Societal Concern for Ethical Standards

The United States is in the midst of what seems to many to be a moral crisis. In the words of Harvard President, Derek Bok, ". . . there has rarely been a time when we have been so dissatisfied with our moral behavior or so beset by ethical dilemmas of every kind."¹ The American public has been shocked by a series of scandals in government, industry and the professions, by a rejection of traditional morality by youth groups, and by a surge of claims of a distinctly moral nature coming from diverse interest groups such as minorities, patients, consumers and environmentalists. Today all of our institutions have come under increased societal scrutiny regarding their ethical practices.

Why is there such a heightened level of concern and indignation on the part of the American people as regards ethical standards? One answer may be that the public previously had a naive view of the realities of business and politics and were shocked by recent revelations of the more sordid side of those affairs as they exist at times. But it may actually be the development of a more mature realization that the practices that have been revealed are an unjustifiable aberration of the ideals in our society of honesty and

fair play. Perhaps the public realizes how essential certain moral dimensions of behavior are to our system of government, economy and societal intercourse. The case can be made that a minimal basis of morality is the very bedrock of our democratic society. In the words of Ivan Hill, "Without a strong basis of ethics, law cannot be sustained. Without a sturdy framework of law, freedom cannot be sustained."² The entire nature of our everyday business and societal interchange would be radically altered if we could not rely on a certain degree of trust and confidence in others. The fact is that honesty, ethics and forthrightness must be viewed not as side issues, but, as Hill puts it, "the central core issues in keeping an open market economy functioning."³

The Military Concern for Ethical Standards

The military establishment is not isolated from the social and political currents of American life. In fact, it derives its identity from the ideals of the society which it serves. It is not a guardian class apart from the American people, but an essential part of the social structure. Therefore, this struggle to clarify the ethical standards of American institutions is reflected in the military establishment. However, there is much more at stake for the military profession than a mere reflection of the ethical climate of the times.

The fact that the armed forces have been entrusted with the military security of the United States places a unique obligation for ethical conduct upon the profession. Upon commissioning, the armed forces officer is designated by the President as a representative of the American people with a "special trust and confidence" in his "patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities."⁴ As expressed by LTC Melville

A. Drisko:

Placing responsibility and power in the hands of military leaders requires an agreement of trust between the profession and the American people. A commitment has traditionally been made by the military officer in the form of an oath - a pledge which entails subordination of self to the greater good of others, in terms of national defense. This formal commitment involves a concept of honor, trust, and integrity which is vital to a profession or 'calling.' It involves leading others in life-death situations, and one in which great responsibility is placed in time of crisis.⁵

Because the nation has entrusted its safety, wealth and youth as well as an awesome arsenal of lethal power to the military profession, the professional officer must uphold a standard of honor and dedication unlike that of any other profession. The point is made in The Armed Forces Officer that:

. . . not only the future of the arms but the well-being of our people depend on a constant reaffirmation and strengthening of public faith in the virtue and trustworthiness of the officer body. Should that faith flag and finally fail, the citizenry would be reluctant to commit its young people to any military endeavor, however grave the emergency.⁶

As a result of this "special trust and confidence," there is an unconditional quality attached to the officer's commitment to his country. Since he deals with matters of life and death of individuals, as well as of nations, he places special emphasis upon loyalty to others, as opposed to personal well-being and survival. This is the "unlimited liability" clause implicit in his commitment to the military profession. He is prepared to give his life to protect his country. He must always be prepared to abandon his routine and personal interests for the deadly mission of warfare. His profession is more than an occupation, it has even been described as a "way of life," a "calling."⁷

Perceptions of Current Ethical Standards
of the Military Profession

As crucial as ethical standards are to the military profession, it is not surprising to find a great deal of concern on the part of both civilians and military officers when those standards appear to have been compromised. Over the past ten years, we have seen considerable ferment of opinion, discussion and criticism about the alleged erosion of ethical behavior in the U.S. military establishment. Some criticism has been justified as a result of a series of scandals that plagued the armed forces, particularly the Army, during the Vietnam war. Aside from those incidents, there has also been concern for what has been described as a prevalence

of ethical malpractices involving professional officers both during and since the Vietnam war. A perusal of the literature over the past ten years reveals an extensive number of books, articles and commentaries addressing the problem of an erosion of military ethics. Much of the earlier commentary involved media coverage of the more blatant scandals that occurred. More recent writings have been produced by both military and former-military authors, as well as civilian scholars of military affairs, who are sincerely concerned about apparently routine unethical practices of the military profession as a whole. Thus, the majority of the criticism and concern is being generated "in-house" (albeit much of it is in response to earlier media attention to specific abuses) and reflects a sincere desire to correct certain professional standards of behavior that fail to uphold the highest standards of military honor.

In response to the growing allegations of problems within the officer corps, a study on military professionalism was conducted in 1970 by the U.S. Army War College at the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army. The Army War College study (hereafter referred to as AWC study) was designed "to assess the professional climate of the Army, to identify any problem areas, and to formulate corrective actions."⁸ Its data base was derived from interviews, seminars and questionnaire responses involving 450 officers from six Army schools at advanced and staff course levels, plus

the students and faculty of the Army War College in May, 1970. For the most part, the study involved an elite cross section of the officer corps and indicated the concerns of the aspiring leadership of the Army. The study presented a sobering portrayal of "a climate which is sufficiently out of step with our time-honored aspirations and the traditional ethics of the professional soldier to warrant immediate attention at the highest levels of the Army."⁹ A predominance of descriptive responses attributed deviations from traditional, accepted ideals to prevailing institutional pressures stemming "from a combination of self-oriented, success-motivated actions, and a lack of professional skills on the part of middle and senior grade officers."¹⁰

A scenario that was repeatedly described in seminar sessions and narrative responses includes an ambitious, transitory commander--marginally skilled in the complexities of his duties--engulfed in producing statistical results, fearful of personal failure, too busy to talk with or listen to his subordinates, and determined to submit acceptably optimistic reports which reflect faultless completion of a variety of tasks at the expense of the sweat and frustration of his subordinates.¹¹

The study found a reassuring commitment among captains and junior majors to the ideal of duty-honor-country, and an intolerance for inept, dishonest or immoral officers who transgressed. However, "they were frustrated by the pressures of the system, disheartened by the seniors who sacrificed integrity on the altar of personal success, and

impatient with what they perceived as preoccupation with insignificant statistics."¹²

The most prevalent result of the study was an indication of an unacceptable gap between the idealized professional climate and that perceived by the respondents to exist. The idealized climate was characterized by: individual integrity, mutual trust and confidence, unselfish motivation, technical competence and an unconstrained flow of information. The existing professional climate was perceived as

. . . selfish behavior that places personal success ahead of the goals of the Service; looking upward to please superiors instead of looking downward to fulfill the legitimate needs of subordinates; preoccupation with the attainment of trivial short-term objectives, even through dishonest practices that injure the long-term fabric of the organization; incomplete communications between junior and seniors which leave the senior uninformed and the junior feeling unimportant; and inadequate technical and managerial competence to perform effectively the assigned duties.¹³

This variance from the ideal was perceived by officers of all grades; however, the more senior the officer, the less he perceived the variation or admitted that he did.

One might respond to the conclusions of the AWC study by saying that it represented a temporary phase of dissatisfaction that occurred as a result of the turmoil of the Vietnam War. Another study of professional military ethics was conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Melville A. Drisko, U.S. Army, in 1977. Although not specifically a replication of the AWC study, Drisko's survey of 2215 Army officers found

overwhelming concern for ethical behavior in the officer corps. A majority of respondents felt that ethical conduct should be more of an issue than it is, that insufficient disciplinary action is taken in cases of offense, that ethical behavior often is negatively sanctioned, and that current Army training programs are ineffective in developing trust, honor and integrity in the officer corps.¹⁴ In contrast to the AWC study, the more senior the respondent, the more he tended to see ethical conduct as a problem. Both studies produced similar narrative comments describing such abuses as selfish behavior, distorted priorities, cover-ups and organizational pressures that downgrade ethical standards.¹⁵

In an assessment of five empirical studies of military professional behavior (including the AWC study), Sam C. Sarkesian, LTC, USA (Ret), found further evidence of two major themes in military officer attitudes--"First, there is an underlying professional dissatisfaction with the military's status and influence in society" and second, there "is the professional's concern over professional ethics, institutional demands and individual values."¹⁶ The studies produced further indications of institutional demands and organizational behavior that "encourage 'careerism', subordinate individual ethics, erode professional ideals and develop a career orientation based on unquestioned acceptance of institutional requirements . . ."¹⁷

The indignation over the state of professional military standards has been expressed also in novels such as Anton Myrer's Once an Eagle and Josiah Bunting's The Lionheads.¹⁸ The sentiment of many officers who resent the fact that there are ethical malpractices in the military is reflected in this comment from one Army officer's review of The Lionheads:¹²

What is particularly galling is that the Army is better than this, yet there is enough truth in Bunting's assessment to make the charges hurt. We temporize and apologize for those who violate our standards rather than rising up in outrage and indignation and casting them out with the scorn and opprobrium they deserve.

Although the concerns reviewed above by no means are in agreement, they all convey a perception of fundamental problems with professional military ethics and of ethical challenges the military profession faces. The content of this literature will be covered more thoroughly later in this study, but it is the very existence of the pervasive feeling of something being wrong which brings us to our basic problem for the study.

The Essence of the Problem

What is the problem?---Is ethical conduct in the military any worse now than it ever was?---and then, does it matter? If so, how?

The answers to these questions could easily get us lost in a morass of statistics and opinions as to the exact level of conformity to some undefined and perhaps undefinable set of standards of behavior. Therefore, no attempt will be made to posit that actual behavior among military officers conforms to a certain level or should adhere within a specific degree to a definitive ideal. It is sufficient to acknowledge that there is a serious level of concern among professional military officers that professional conduct, as they see it, does not meet the standards they expect.

As for the question of comparison of current professional behavior with that of the past, one should avoid the tendency to romanticize the "good old days." Some critics have alleged that the basis of our problem is that we have lost the purity of the military ethic that supposedly existed sometime previously. It is not uncommon to find references such as this:

. . . In the somewhat distant past, when the officer corps was a small professional body where reputations preceded men and when the Army was scattered about the country in small isolated posts, the ethic apparently was internalized.²⁰

However, accounts of military activities as far back as the Revolutionary War demonstrate that there never was an ideal era of pure conformity to the professional ethic.²¹ Even such novels as James Jones' From Here to Eternity illustrate the fact that many practices that seemingly were condoned in the

"good old days" would never be tolerated today.²² An excerpt from Fortune Magazine in 1935 provides an explicit denunciation of the career system then:

By and large, one reaches the top in the Army by avoiding syphilis and reckless taxi drivers, also by refraining from murder, rape, and speculation.²³

The attention to the current gap between perceptions of actual and expected behavior makes irrelevant the concern over whether professional conduct is any better or worse now than in the past. The point is that a significant number of professional officers are dissatisfied with the way things are being done today. Professional ethical standards actually could be higher now than in the past (and many think they are). Yet, the results apparently are still not good enough, according to the expectations of the profession itself and of concerned outside observers. It is this gap between perceived actual behavior and a desired standard of conformance to a professional military ethic that, henceforth, will be referred to as the problem of the study.

Focus of the Problem

The focus of this study is on the professional ethical conduct of the armed forces officer. Although the major concern is with the career leadership of the services, adherence to military ethical standards is expected of every officer who takes the oath of commission, whether active duty

or reserve, whether for a short term or career. Thus, I refer to all military officers as professional officers.*

Among studies of the military profession, the most widely accepted definition of professionalism is that of Samuel P. Huntington.²⁴ He identifies the distinguishing characteristics of a profession as expertise, responsibility and corporateness. The professional person is specialized in the knowledge and practical application of significant fields of expertise acquired by primarily internal education and experience and subject to a group-enforced objective set of standards. The client of every profession is society and the professional person has the social responsibility to perform a service for the society. Finally, the members of a profession share a sense of organic unity or group consciousness that separates them from laymen. Huntington borrows a phrase from Harold Lasswell to describe the shared sphere of competence for military officers as "the management of violence." This puts the singular professional focus on the function of preparing, planning and directing military force toward successful armed combat. The military expertise of the officer imposes upon him a special responsibility to employ military force only for socially approved purposes. The officer corps constitutes the professional organization for the military and encompasses all activities, life and work of the officer.

*Although this discussion applies to career enlisted personnel, as well as officers, it is to the officer corps we look to set the professional standards.

Bradford and Murphy object to the Huntington model as inadequate to describe the military as a profession.²⁵ They argue that the concept of "management of violence" is insufficient to describe the current role of the American military establishment and that the military profession itself cannot be narrowly defined by any specific functional expertise. The Huntington model fails to account for such military functions as deterrence of violence, peace-keeping, arms control, civic action, pacification and disaster control. Furthermore, the skill requirements of the military establishment have been expanding increasingly into areas not specifically related to traditional combat functions. An arbitrary standard of manager of violence is too narrow to comprehend the broad range of skills required within the military profession.

Bradford and Murphy also contend that Huntington puts the cart before the horse by describing responsibility as a function of the peculiar military expertise, i.e., that the officer must be responsible because he has the expertise. They turn the phrase around to say, "the special social responsibility of the officer requires of him an expertise." Thus, the most essential aspect of military professionalism is "an internalized sense of responsibility, of allegiance to duly constituted authority."²⁶ The officer acquires and maintains a required level of competence in order to fulfill his responsibility of duty under an unlimited contract for public service. By joining the officer corps, he makes a professional

commitment to subscribe to the operating norms of his corporate professional community, as well as to the generally accepted ethical norms of the society. In so doing, he adheres to a collective sense of duty and to the group values of the military profession. According to Bradford and Murphy:

Apart from belonging to the officer corps, professionalism is, then, a status determined jointly by the officer and his government. Neither the state nor the officer corps will grant professional standing to the man who lacks the necessary competence or who will not agree to make a commitment to duty which on the part of the state is assumed to be unconditional. The unconditional quality of this commitment is signified by the career length and a life of selfless sacrifice, ranging from Melville Goodwin's "genteel poverty" to the Gettysburg "last full measure of devotion."²⁷

For the purpose of this study, the terms "professionalism" and "professional behavior" will refer to: (1) the degree to which a military officer adheres to the unlimited obligation of service to his country and allegiance to the duly constituted authority regulating military activity, (2) the extent to which he maintains and applies the competence necessary to fulfill his duty, and (3) the measure of his conformity to the shared corporate values essential to honoring the special trust and confidence vested in the military profession. This concept of professionalism has the advantage of including all military officers, whether members of the combat arms or service support specialities. It avoids the tendency to regard the ordnance officer, commissary officer or doctor as inherently a less professional military officer

than the infantry officer or combat aviator. Yet, it still preserves the concept of the uniqueness of military professionalism manifested in the shared essential military values.

These values of the military profession are derived from two interrelated sources. One source is the special trust and confidence vested in the profession by society. The other consists of the core values of the profession itself, those which enable it to perform its unique military mission in an effective manner.

All professions hold a special place of trust with respect to the public because they possess a level of monopolistic expertise that is considered critical for the protection, well-being and survival of the society. This creates a situation open to unscrupulous abuse of power over the public unless checked by the practice of a set of ethical standards. These ethical standards are assumed by the professions in tacit recognition for the trust conferred by the public. Adherence to an ethical code assures the public that the profession is "acting in the best interests of society."²⁸ Furthermore, in recognition of the profession's competence and judicious performance, the society grants it perquisites of esteem, status and privileges.

The public responds to perceived professional indiscretions and erosion of organizational credibility by withdrawing esteem or support from the profession. It may even withdraw a measure of autonomy by placing societal controls upon the

profession when it judges that the profession cannot maintain its own corporate self-discipline. Indications of this process can be seen in the situation of many professions in America today, particularly the medical profession which is suffering the consequences of malpractice suits and a slight erosion of status.

The military profession, as stated earlier, is different from other professions. Although the public places a life-and-death trust in the medical profession, the potential consequences are limited to individual lives. The military profession holds a trust and confidence of far greater magnitude which affects the security and destiny of the entire nation. This trust relationship places conviction and integrity at the very foundation of the military ethic. This ethic has been with us throughout our history. The first U.S. Army Field Manual, G.O. No. 100 of 24 April, 1863, asserted:

Men who take up arms against another in public war do not cease on this account²⁹ to be moral beings, responsible to one another.

The ethical foundation of military values, aside from being necessitated by the special trust vested in the military profession to provide the nation's security, is also derived from the traditional core values essential to the military mission and organizational effectiveness. These core values are those considered critical to the purpose of the profession and, thus, are protected by severe sanctions.

Again, because the military deals with matters of life and death of both individuals as well as nations, there is a special emphasis on the value of organizational, as opposed to individual survival.³⁰ The officer must subordinate his well-being and self to the good of the military unit and the nation. As Samuel P. Huntington has observed:

The responsibility of the military profession to enhance the military security of the state requires cooperation, organization and discipline. Emphasis is on the group rather than the individual. The will of the individual must be subordinated to the will of the group. Tradition, esprit, unity, and community become essential as the officer devotes his personal interests and desires to the good of the service.³¹

The intense group loyalty and solidarity engendered within the military establishment is one of the essential factors enabling the profession to execute its task.³² General Kerwin, USA, has aptly expressed its importance:

We know that this sense of community is what makes these soldiers fight. This is built by creating a sense of belonging, a sense that the Army cares about them and their welfare.³³

Morris Janowitz points out that it is an adherence to the combat goals, along with "a sense of social solidarity, grounded in tradition and sentiment," that enables the military to avoid the purely managerial image of the engineer or technocrat.³⁴ Every member of the military profession, combat commander to procurement officer, must be acutely aware of his membership in the corporate body and must direct all his expertise and effort to the fundamental military

mission. This is what makes the military professional different from the rest of society, no matter how much his particular specialty may resemble that of a civilian counterpart.

A second core value closely related to that of group solidarity is the obligation of loyalty and obedience. One element of the military ethic is subordination to the country's political authorities and the Constitution. The legitimacy of the laws and regulations governing the military and the authority of the military hierarchy rests upon those authorities. Every officer is vested with the special trust and confidence of the nation and, in effect, is a representative of the President in performing an essential aspect of the national security mission. The officer has not only a legal, but also a moral obligation to respect the authority attested to in the freely given commitment of his oath of office. He is loyal to his country and his superiors and obeys lawful orders and regulations not only because of legal obligation, but because it is his duty.

It is this sense of loyalty to the higher values of the country that keeps the first core value of group solidarity in perspective. That is, it precludes what could become a tendency for the group (the military organization) to pursue its own interests in preference to those of the nation it exists to serve.

Another core military value is integrity, which means an uncompromising adherence to moral virtues of truth, candor

and sincerity. It means the avoidance of deception, expediency, artificiality or shallowness of any kind. For the military profession, integrity has always been essential to reliable performance:

Lives, careers, battles, and the fate of nations have hung upon the ability of military leaders to state all the true facts to the best of their knowledge, regardless of what effect these facts might have on themselves or others.³⁵

Personal integrity is as, or more, essential now than ever before. The increased complexity of weapons systems and national security policy have placed renewed demands upon the need for trust, morale and effectiveness. An untrustworthy, quibbling or temporizing leader can readily erode the morale and effectiveness of his subordinates. Cheating, violation of trust and sacrificing others for personal gain are certain to destroy the cohesion and dedication essential for the success of the military profession.

In summary, the professional military ethic is defined as the set of expectations for behavior that is commonly understood and generally accepted by the military profession.

These expectations are derived from the trust and confidence vested in the profession by the nation and from the traditional and developing values necessary to fulfillment of the unique military mission.

One result of the AWC study was that officers generally were found to share a common view of the "professional

prescriptions and proscriptions which define how an officer is supposed to think, evaluate, decide and act.³⁶ The virtues of military professionalism are most commonly expressed in terms of the West Point motto: Duty, Honor, Country. The basic themes of commitment, service, trust, loyalty, obedience and integrity are widely accepted.³⁷

In the abstract, it is easy to find universal acceptance of broad value concepts. However, the difficulty comes in translating these expressions into operable specific guidelines for behavior. In order to deal with problems of military professionalism and ethics, we must understand the process of applying military values to the exigencies of the environment in which the military officer serves and prepares for the ultimate mission of national security. It is to such an understanding of those processes that we shall soon turn. But first, we will examine some of the prevailing views of the causes of today's problems in military ethics.

CHAPTER III

OTHER VIEWS ON THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM

Shifting Morality as the Culprit

One view of the source of the ethics problem holds that military values are being eroded by the influence of shifting standards of morality and permissiveness within the greater society. Proponents view with alarm the so-called "New Morality," popularized in the 60's, along with the many changes our society has witnessed in what has indeed been a social revolution. Then they point out what they see as a dangerous liberalization campaign by the armed forces designed to cater to the apparent prejudices and whims of the society and to lure reluctant youths into a more attractive military experience. Here they can make examples of such practices as beer in the barracks, elimination of reveille and KP, junior officer, longer hair and greater disciplinary problems. In this vein, Rear Admiral Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr. charges the military leadership with yielding:

. . . to pressure from trendy sociologists and psychologists who try to liberalize that which cannot be liberalized without imperiling the source of all our national liberties, the very survival of our nation.¹

Finally, the problem of ethical behavior in the military profession, in this view, is pictured as stemming from an abandonment of absolute ethical principles in favor of the situation ethics of the "New Morality." The absolutists

desire a return to the hard-core military values of the past and blame any incidents of unethical behavior or substandard performance on what they perceive as a casual, equivocating attitude that has come to permeate the services. Many regard dissent as dangerous and traitorous to professional ethics.

The trouble with this approach is not so much whether it is correct, but that it attacks the symptoms rather than the fundamental causes of the problem and usually involves only exhortation to return to a more acceptable level of morality. The approach is transitory in nature and fails to resolve the source of the problem. Many changes have occurred both in the society and the military that have created challenges to military procedures. We need to understand what the effects of those influences are, which can be controlled and which we must adapt to, and what challenges they present to professional military values. I will pursue that understanding in Chapter IV.

Civilianization as the Culprit

A more sophisticated approach to the source of the ethics problem involves the fusion vs. isolation debate. The concept is borrowed from the debate between two competing models depicting the relationship of the military establishment to society. On one end is the fusionist model (also called convergent, soldier-statesman, or pluralistic) in

which the military profession is an integral part of society, sharing its values and participating in the policymaking process. At the other extreme is the isolationist role (also called heroic fighter, apolitical or occupational) in which the profession adheres strictly to the traditional military functions, preserves a distinct set of values, and remains apart from the rest of society.² The debate usually concerns various types of civil control of the military. In this instance, however, the relationship of the military profession to society is used to explain the state of military ethical behavior.

The basic premise of the anticivilianization argument is that military values are fundamentally different from those of society and are subject to compromise if convergence occurs. Huntington characterizes the professional military ethic as one of "conservative realism" which is in contrast with the liberalism predominant in American society. He writes:

The ideals of liberty, democracy, equality and peace have contrasted with the military's concern with authority, hierarchy, obedience, force, and war.³

Some critics see the military as getting too close to adopting the values of society:

'Civilianism' may be understood according to a three-part formula: an emphasis on the individual, a democratic egalitarianism, and a deliberate or judicial decisionmaking process. The military, by contrast, emphasizes the interest of the organization, a hierarchical structure and an authoritarian or command

decisionmaking process. While civilian influence can help make the military more cordial to society, civilianism may seriously impair the efficiency or dependability of the military.⁴

Likewise, another author writes:

The most pressing threat to military capability is overexposure to rapidly shifting societal values. Isolation to preserve identity is preferable to immersion to stimulate rapid accommodation.⁵

Although most see the immersion role as being an extreme relationship that must be avoided, others regard the military ethic as eroded already by a trend that has carried the military profession from some former isolated existence into a dangerous identification with civilian lifestyles, incentives and work routines. According to one view, the military's sense of community and basic values has "become more diluted as the Army has become more integrated into civilian society."⁶ Another critic alleges that the "intrinsic" motivation which the officer derives from the trust and confidence vested in him by the public has been replaced "by an expressed need for 'extrinsic' economic rewards as motivation."⁷ By this he means:

. . . the goals of the military are no longer perceived as the goals of the individual officer unless they are paired with the attainment of economic rewards. The marketplace environment is all too often conducive to evoking the situational ethic with the resulting behavior . . . motivated by self-interest and the good of the individual making the decision.⁸

And to one critic, it seems we have sunk already beyond the point of no return:

. . . the prospects for the full return of military pride and esprit seem slim. In fact, many career military men seem already to have acceded to the new civilian ethic.⁹

Although the reaction to the anticivilianists could be to withdraw the military into isolation, there are many who are wary of the separatist model. Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard, Jr., regards the military establishment as part of the society, to "be employed in a manner consistent with societal values."¹⁰ Others agree that the only justification for the possession of such vast power by the military is that the military ethic rest upon such values.¹¹ Indeed, the prospect of radical separation risks losing the traditional concept of every citizen a warrior and every warrior a citizen,* resulting in an "alien" military force greatly at odds with the public. Professor Sam C. Sarkesian warns of the potential danger of an alienated military establishment that retreats into isolation:

Any military establishment that is separated from society and becomes desensitized to the attitudes and needs of the political system that supports it, is nothing less than a state within a state - incompatible in a democracy and dangerous to the individual liberty.¹²

*If not already lost through the All-Volunteer Force concept.

The separationist attitude also gives rise to a self-righteousness that, if it became pervasive, could be dangerous. As John H. Moellering cautions, "This is the self-perception by the officer corps that it alone is virtuous in a decadent American society and must be the savior of that society."¹³ Another fear is that a military establishment that does not reflect the values of the society as a whole will reflect the most dangerously militaristic views of certain parts of the society. In a study of the My Lai scandal Professor Peter Karsten found that the more "militarist" officers were either those with little or no college education or Service Academy graduates, and he found that they were implicated far more frequently in the commission or cover-up of atrocities and other scandals than were the more "civilianized" ROTC graduates. He fears that "a volunteer army of 'pros', void of citizen-officers coming in out of the draft, would be dangerous."¹⁴

The major problem with this debate over the relationship of the military to society is that it may be pointless in terms of how we can change the situation. The actual nature of the relationship is a product of factors* largely beyond the military's control. Besides, a clear case has not been made to link the causes of unprofessional behavior to adoption of civilian values. For one thing, the American public does not possess a monolithic standard of morality. There are values, attitudes and lifestyles in the civilian environment both compatible and incompatible with military professionalism.

*Such as the Constitution, Congressional appropriation, and Executive Office Policy.

Furthermore, it has not been established that increased contact with civilians or even adoption of some similar lifestyles will necessarily cause the military profession to abandon its ethical bases. Admittedly, there are aspects of the military way that must remain unchanged, and there are challenges facing the profession due to its relationship to society. But before we decide to move closer to or farther from the parent society to solve our ethics problems, we must attempt to understand and meet the challenge today's situation presents.

Entrepreneurialism and Management as the Culprit

A closely related debated to that of the convergence/isolation issue is that regarding the institution vs. occupation (or entrepreneurialism) model. Although concerned also with so-called civilianizing trends, the latter model refers not so much to the physical closeness of the military to society as to the adoption by the military of certain organizational formats characteristic of civilian occupations. The model has been most thoroughly developed by Moskos who describes an institution as "legitimated" in terms of values and norms, i.e., a purpose transcending individual self-interest in favor of a presumed higher good.¹⁵ The members of an institution often regard themselves as following a calling in which they feel they are separate from the broader society. Grievances are resolved not by interest groups but in a "one-on-one" paternalistic system of recourse to superiors.

An occupation, on the other hand, "is legitimated in terms of the marketplace, i.e., prevailing monetary rewards for equivalent competencies."¹⁶ Self-interest takes precedence over the organization; rights are balanced by contractual obligations, and grievances are commonly resolved through trade unions.

Military service is characterized traditionally as having many institutional features in terms of lifestyle, service liability, control over subordinates and remuneration system. The concerns of many critics are that "the American military is moving from an institutional format to one more and more resembling that of an occupation"¹⁷ and that this shift is resulting in particular adverse organizational outcomes.

While Moskos does not tie this occupational shift directly to ethical behavior, others have used it specifically to place the blame for the entire ethics problem. Most prominent in this approach is the book, Crisis in Command, in which Gabriel and Savage allege that the U.S. Army has become permeated with "behavioral and ethical tendencies that threaten the ability of the organization to withstand even minimal combat stress."¹⁸ They blame an epidemic of careerism, incompetence and ineffectual leadership on the development and adoption by the Army of:

. . . a new ethical code rooted in the entrepreneurial model of the modern business corporation. The traditional ethics which buttressed the code of duty-honor-

country had begun to weaken, and in their place, the military officer was expected to operate within a code of ethics drawn largely from the practices of the free-enterprise marketplace.¹⁹

They trace the problem of the Army to World War II when General Marshall supposedly "turned to" the model of the modern business corporations for the techniques of management. The trend continued as Secretary McNamara later introduced more modern business practices, cost-effectiveness analyses, systems perspectives and "zero defects." According to Gabriel and Savage, the traditional aspects of the "military way" collapsed as officers became preoccupied with "systems analysis" and "career management" and identified themselves with the corporate executive to the exclusion of command functions. They allege that:

General Marshall could hardly have foreseen that the results of choosing the business corporation as an organizational model could have been the weakening and eventual destruction of traditional military values.²⁰

Others also have identified the problem as an organizational trend that began with World War II. Ronald P. Dunwell claims that the role of the military officer has changed to involve him in many nonmilitary activities of civil affairs, political interface and management to the extent that the military has taken on "some of the undesirable side effects of many sophisticated bureaucracies. Status, choice assignments, and empire building become more and more important . . ."²¹ Officers supposedly have assumed the values and

goals of large bureaucracies described as "materialism" and "mediocracy." The result, according to Dunwell, is a "two-headed image of isolated leadership and reduced ability to conduct war" as leaders become more and more isolated from their operational units."²² Edward L. King similarly traces the problem to the image of the "organization man," introduced by military technocrats, such as Maxwell Taylor, John Medaris, and the "airborne club." He claims, "they accepted the precepts of modernization and constant corporate growth that were dominant in American industry."²³ The result, the argument goes, was a preoccupation with building a showy image copied from Madison Avenue techniques, moral laxness leading to subterfuge, public deception and promotion of self-interest, and parochialism disguised as patriotism.

One basic theme to this criticism is the implication that the business world is inherently devoid of morality; that any use by the military of business practices must necessarily corrupt military values. Some excerpts from those writings illustrate the point:

In a free-enterprise economy, business 'ethics' are dictated only by cost-effectiveness, which, in turn, is directed solely to the maximization of profit. In a sense, the free-enterprise system...constitutes the negation of ethics...²⁴

Perhaps...it is unrealistic to expect the Army to adopt the technology of business without finally adopting its ethics.²⁵

Although the degree has never been determined, the present tendency and apparent desire of many of the higher-grade officers to identify with the political,

managerial, and technological style of the bureaucrat must necessarily detract from the armed forces ability to fight.²⁶

The cumulative impact of this change in ethical perspectives within the military has been to bring about the rise and emulation of the 'officer as entrepreneur,' the man adept at managing his own career by manipulating the system, mastering its technology,...having his 'ticket punched,' and achieving the 'right' assignments.²⁷

Another theme of this criticism is that the military profession's alleged preoccupation with management is displacing a more proper attention to leadership. The critics see management as a separate entity from leadership, or even as its negation. The term "managerialism" comes into vogue as a pejorative reference to instances of blatant misuse of the tools of management and to the treatment of men not as human beings but as commodities to be used. In this vein, Ernest L. Webb portrays the use of statistics as "symptomatic of our self-debilitating shift from leadership to management as we 'behave more and more like civilians.'"²⁸ He even makes the connotation that management is diametrically opposed to conduct of war:

We did not 'fight' the war in Vietnam, we 'managed' it - and reported it through good management techniques, such as quantifiable statistical analysis...²⁹

The basic problem with this approach is that it, like the earlier discussed critiques, deals with the symptoms of the problem and then tries to pin the blame on a scapegoat of "managerialism." Many of the same problems of unacceptable professional behavior were thoroughly exposed in the Army War College study in 1970. The findings of that and other studies,

however, indicate that these problems, rather than being caused by adoption of "business practices" or management procedures, were typically manifestations of poor management. If the former were true, of course, the military profession should shy away from the practice of management; the evidence implies, rather, that better training in management is in order. The use of the terms "management" or "managerialism" as pejorative references in the eyes of the military is unfortunate. The discipline of management offers a set of functions, tools and approaches providing tremendous utility to the military officer. It is important, however, that these functions of management be placed in their proper perspective.³⁰ Certainly, the conduct of modern, sophisticated warfare requires not only courageous leadership, ingenuity and discipline, but it also requires rational and efficient allocation of men and material to the war effort. Nevertheless, the contention often is made that war is inherently and unalterably both irrational and inefficient and that attempts to make it otherwise are futile and self-defeating. For instance, Bradford and Brown feel that:

this emphasis [on efficiency] is fundamentally wrong... Efficiency is necessary; however, the ultimate criterion for evaluation of success is not efficient allocation of resources. Perhaps reductio ad absurdum, war is the ultimate uneconomic use of resources...The Army ...must have the moral courage to become 'inefficient.'³¹

This view confuses what may be inefficient conduct of war with the need for efficient allocation of war resources. The

Prussian strategist, Carl von Clausewitz,³² recognized nearly 150 years ago that war, in practice, tends to degenerate into chaos. He did not deny that war may be an inefficient means to pursue political objectives, but did assert that war should be purposeful and directed and that resources applied should be in proportion to the objective sought. The point is that the ultimate criterion for success may, in certain circumstances, truly rest upon the economic use of resources. The commander who cannot efficiently allocate scarce resources, communicate his intentions to subordinates, and employing tried and true principles of leadership, apply available men and materiel to the most effective accomplishment of the mission stands to lose to the opponent who may be a better manager than he is.

The allegation that the military establishment "borrowed" the techniques of modern industry is lacking in historical perspective. Most of those "good business" practices were developed by the military itself to meet particular exigencies required by a rapidly expanded and highly sophisticated combat organization. The use of operations research began in World War II as British scientists and engineers began to apply mathematical techniques to problems of evaluating the relative efficiency and worth of various military activities. After the war, the use of differing technological options to pursue a strategy of deterrence became increasingly problematical. As Yarmolinski states :

The highly complex and extremely expensive technology employed to implement this policy required, for intelligent direction of this effort, an ability to assess the relative value of diverse weapons systems in a rapidly changing technical environment.³³

Janowitz points out that, rather than the techniques being borrowed from industry, in many cases it was the business sector that copied innovations from the military:

Because from earliest times war has involved large-scale organization, military leaders have been concerned not only with technology, but also with organizational innovation...The basic element of large-scale organization, the distinction between staff and line, originated in the military and has been copied by economic and governmental enterprise. Managerial techniques based on statistics, mathematics, and the electronic processing of data, such as quality control and, more recently, operations research, flourished first in the military.

The necessity to employ management procedures does not mean that the military establishment has always used them properly or that the officer profession has not become preoccupied with "careerist" entrepreneurial motivations. No doubt, there have been many instances of overemphasis on and/or misuse of the quantitative side of analysis and disregard for the essential nonquantitative people factors. And, no doubt, the military establishment, just as industry and other professions, faces many ethical dilemmas that the working environment places upon the integrity of its members. However, we must begin by exploring the environmental situation affecting military professionalism today and the many factors and strains that affect the military organization in

accomplishing its mission of national security. Then, by identifying where our shortcomings are and finding ways to resolve them, we will do much more to alleviate the problem than to wring our hands over an inadequacy to overcome the challenges that face the military profession in a highly complex and changing environment.

CHAPTER IV

UNDERSTANDING THE ETHICS PROBLEM:

THE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER IN THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION

In Chapter II, I defined the ethics problem as the perception within the military profession that the general ethical conduct of its members does not meet the standards expected of military officers. In this chapter I will examine the environmental and situational factors that help shape individual motivations, commitments and inclinations to act in accordance with the ethical standards of the profession. (I am not arguing for environmental determinism. Human behavior is a complex product of both individual values and general situational factors.) In Chapter VI I will address the responsibility of the individual officer for applying his own set of values and morality to the situations of military duty. But first, I will examine the sphere of influences that form the military professional setting, starting with the broader societal environment, then narrowing to the specific military environment. Then I will discuss the particular factors that create strains upon ethical conduct, some of which are inherent to the organizational environment, while others are needlessly placed upon individuals by those who establish the policies and procedures of the organization.

The Societal Environment

The Army War College study of 1970 concluded that external or societal forces were not a primary causative factor of conditions in the Army's professional ethical climate. Rather, they were attributed to organizational and leadership factors. Nevertheless, the military profession cannot escape being affected, to some degree, by events occurring within the parent society. After all, the armed forces receive strategic direction, budgetary sustenance and personnel input from the civil sector. In spite of debates as to the convergence or the separateness of the military from society, the military establishment is very much a part and reflection of the population it serves.

Some people will say that the problem of military ethics is an internal one and lies with the ethical values of the officer in uniform; not the society. That proposition has merit and certainly identifies where the focus of our efforts should be directed. Yet we cannot escape the fact that all of our officers are products of our social system. We also cannot deny that there has been a remarkable amount of change in our society that strongly influences the values and commitments of the young men entering the service today. One only has to reflect upon the impressions formed by youths weaned on such television programs as McHale's Navy and M*A*S*H*, rather than Victory at Sea.

To say that the current young generation entertains a value system at odds with that of its elders is nothing new. One can look as far back as the writings of Plato for references to rebellion and alienation among a nation's youth. What is different today is the rate and scope of change. It has been stated that the United States, and perhaps all of Western culture, is undergoing a revolution--not just technological, but also social, political, economic, administrative, youth, sexual, educational and urban revolutions. During the past two decades, we have witnessed the coalescence of social activism, civil rights and antiwar movements in a general attack on "the Establishment" as representative of a "sick society." While the intensity of those movements may have receded in recent years, we are facing a rapidity of technological change with which our means of social and cultural adaptation cannot keep pace.¹ In addition to those problems, many people are becoming increasingly uneasy that the national security may be threatened more from resource depletion and ecological destruction than from foreign aggression.² The net result of these changes has been an unprecedented challenge to the moral, philosophical and ideological grounds of established tradition, policies and practices in this country.

I will not attempt to assess where those challenges are taking us as a nation. My concern here is their effect upon the military profession. One significant factor involves the

nation's sense of strategic purpose and how the military is utilized. I will explore that dimension in Chapter V.

Another factor of even more immediate significance to the military concerns the young officers and enlisted men coming into the services today. Here I am referring to the so-called "generation gap" which has considerable impact on the ability of senior officers and noncommissioned officers to relate to the young men under their influence. The former are faced with a major problem in inspiring integrity in young people who have a radically new sense of values. There are deep-seated doubts among youths concerning the responsiveness of larger institutions to individual and social needs. This leads to a cynicism toward bureaucracies and a tendency to challenge authority. They do not find their identity in institutions as their elders have. When they become a part of a military institution, it does not hold their primary loyalty. As Chaplin (MG) Henry J. Meade writes, "It is where they earn their living. Moral and spiritual values are less important than self-realization--self fulfillment. Identity is found outside the institution and its values."³

This is the generation that is filling the junior officer ranks. They are increasingly inclined to question authority. Tradition and empty appeals to patriotism are no longer sufficient to ensure the resolve, loyalty and discipline needed in a military organization. The services cannot rely on early experience and education in society to provide the commitment to integrity and service expected of the officer

corps.⁴ The challenge to the military profession is first to recognize the societal revolution as I have described it, and then to devise ways to relate to the client society without sacrificing essential core values.

The Military Environment

In addition to being affected by the changes going on in the civilian sector, the armed forces have been experiencing considerable internal change. Since World War II, the military establishment has undergone a revolution not only in technology, but also in personnel and administrative procedures.

Following widely alleged abuses in military systems during World War II, the Doolittle Board set in motion measures that greatly expanded the rights of the individual while restricting command authority. The war crimes trials following the war established the precedent that orders should not be obeyed if they were illegal. The military justice system saw a series of revisions stemming from a "national concern for rights of the individuals."⁹ Advances in communications facilitated a progressive centralization of authority and increased involvement at higher echelons in diverse unit affairs. All of these changes have created challenges to the authority of military leaders.⁶

As the armed forces have increased in size, complexity and sophistication of weapons, tactics and organization, the requirement for skilled and motivated personnel has also risen.

Janowitz, recognizing this trend in 1960, wrote that the sophistication and independence of so many tasks have put "an important element of power in each member who must make a technical contribution to the success of the undertaking." He added that this has necessitated a gradual shift "from authoritarian domination toward a greater reliance on manipulation, persuasion, and group consensus."⁷ The diversity of specialized skills creates expertise that may have more in common with civilian occupations than with traditional military arts. The result may be identification with other professions whose values may be in conflict with professional military loyalties. Just the size and diversity of the modern peacetime military establishment make commitment to any single set of values difficult. Although these factors make adherence to "a professional military ethic difficult today, they also make it all the more imperative."⁸

Another aspect of the increasing sophistication of jobs is that many military skills have considerable transfer potential to the civil sector. Thus, the services not only have to worry about incentives to induce individuals to start a military career, but also have to make extra efforts to retain them. Associated with the incentives and liberalization programs instituted with the All-Volunteer Force can be a tendency to regard military service as "just a job." However, a bigger problem with respect to such inducements is that they may not work. The increased intelligence and skills needed for most jobs, plus the transfer potential of those skills,

put the military in a position of competing with industry for scarce talent. But military pay and benefits cannot hope to keep up with what the private sector can offer. Something else is needed.

David G. Deininger, a young Annapolis graduate, reported in 1970 that the two primary inducements being used to appeal to his generation were increased pay and the provision of civilian-type comforts traditionally denied to the military:

. . . The basic fallacy underlying the 'increased pay' and 'increased privileges' solutions to the problems of motivation among junior military and naval officers is that these solutions assume that the evaporation of 'traditional American ideals' has left only materialism and hedonism in its traces. This is not the case.⁹

He stated that this approach ignores the fact that much of the alienation of the young generation has been in rejection of materialism--the fact that many youths "are rebelling because of the dearth of opportunities available to them in American society and 'to do their own thing' for other than material gain."¹⁰ He added that considering the "military mind" image of the super patriot, taking an ultranationalistic approach does little to appeal to the younger generation.

Professional Officer vs. Career Bureaucrat Dilemma

It has been said of prisoner-of-war situations involving extraction of information that every man has his breaking point. It might also be said of situations of routine behavior that every moral man has an ethical threshold. That is,

while it may be the personal standard of conduct of an officer not to lie, cheat, or steal, he must apply the standards to real situations. He may cross the threshold of his ethical standards for either of two reasons. First, he may consider the situational particulars too trivial to consider. For example, the moral man who would not consider stealing the office typewriter may think nothing of using government paper for personal correspondence. At other times, situational pressures may regulate his ethical judgment. The executive who believes official statements to be a sacred point of honor may consider it prudent to omit some derogatory information from a status report and only fair to inflate the evaluation report of a subordinate.

It is in the day-to-day exercise of such decisions that the ethical conduct of a professional officer is manifested. The problem is not with the overtly dishonest individual who flagrantly misappropriates property or deceives with malicious intent; it has more to do with officers who are just doing their jobs in what seems to be the best way to get things done. The problem is often the sincere, dedicated individual who allows his ethical threshold to become too elastic. It can also be the particular system and procedures enacted to get a job done that cause erosion of professional standards and encourage or even demand lapses in integrity. The reasons stem from a strain inherent in organizational life involving a professional officer vs. career bureaucrat dilemma.

Steve Sloane has described the military professional, like any professional in a large bureaucracy, as being subject to the tension of dual roles. In one role he is a professional military man concerned with national security, patriotism, mission accomplishment and heroic effort. He is dedicated to duty and honor, and is uncompromising in his "willingness to sacrifice his comfort as well as life." In his second role he is a career bureaucrat involved with administration, power, routine, rules and the inertia of a large bureaucratic organization. He functions as an employee who is concerned with pay, benefits and making a "demonstrable contribution" to the objectives of the organization.¹¹

The more the officer rises within the hierarchy, the more he is cast in the role of a general administrator. At the "working level" of a professional, it is easier for him to adhere to the concerns of the professional ethic, but as he becomes more and more involved with policy decisions and administrative matters, he becomes more concerned with problems of the organization. As Sloane describes it:

In this respect his role becomes increasingly non-professional and he may find himself frequently in conflict with those who remain concerned with professional rather than organizational problems.¹²

The professional officer vs. career bureaucrat dilemma has been described also by Janowitz:

The history of the modern military establishment can be described as a struggle between the heroic leaders, who embody traditionalism and glory, and military "managers", who are concerned with the scientific and rational conduct of war. This distinction is fundamental. The military manager reflects the scientific and pragmatic dimensions of war-making; he is the professional with effective links to civilian society. The heroic leader is a perpetuation of the warrior type, the mounted officer who embodies the martial spirit and the theme of personal valor.¹³

This dilemma cannot be removed. We must accept it and face it as a challenge to the maintenance of our professional standards. As long as military forces are organized into large establishments with hierarchies, this dilemma is an inevitable result. Let us turn now to some of the specific strains placed upon the officer's integrity in his role as a career bureaucrat.

Mission Orientation. The military leader appropriately is dedicated to accomplishment of his mission. Considerations of personal safety and convenience must be subordinated to the military mission. However, the emphasis can cause ethical problems, as described by Major General Robert N. Ginsburgh, USAF (Ret):

The concept of duty and honor put an extremely high premium on mission, especially unit mission - a premium not reflected in most of the more traditional professions. This emphasis can cause some problems. Overemphasis on mission can lead to the age-old ethical problem of subordination of means to ends.¹⁴

The overemphasis becomes one of "just getting the job done," no matter what the consequence or a pragmatic attitude

to "follow what works." Right and wrong become blurred in ethical relativism as means are subordinated to ends.¹⁵ Similar attitudes have been reported in the civil sector where the relative worth of business conduct is often translated as doing whatever is dictated by "business prudence" or "good business" as a kind of performance ethic. Such is the justification for dishonesty and bribery tolerated for the sake of high productivity, high profits and mission accomplishment.¹⁶ The attitude within the armed forces leads to rationalization of such practices as "moonlight requisitioning," inflated prioritization and parochialism.

An outgrowth of the overemphasis on mission is the "Can Do" attitude. Such an expectation takes advantage of the motivation of officers to attempt to accomplish the utmost in spite of lack of resources and difficulty of missions. It is abused when commanders do not establish priorities or disregard limitations, expecting utmost attention to be given to their every whim. The result is that subordinates jump from one task to another to accomplish whatever the commander emphasizes at a given time. Everything becomes first priority.¹⁷

Coupled with the "Can Do" attitude are unrealistic demands for perfection or goals that demand 100% success rates such as Zero Defects campaigns and expectations of equipment nonoperations rates of zero. Such goals guarantee eventual failure for all, as no one can sustain zero defects indefinitely. The consequences of failure stifle initiative by

breeding fear and avoidance of responsibility. For example, the Air Force Zero Defects program started as a management tool to develop professional and personal excellence through minimum error. It was exaggerated to the point of creating a "Zero Error Mentality" with complete intolerance for mistakes and misfortune. Risk avoidance stifled initiative and produced a "grotesque philosophy that it is worse to report a mistake than it is to make one."¹⁸

Expectations of faultless performance are unrealistic and unjustified for the military and impossible because of the complexity of organizations, changing missions, and varying aptitudes of people. They are also self-defeating in terms of development of subordinates' capability and motivation. They remove the freedom to learn by failing and create tendencies to avoid responsibility and to accomplish only what shows.

A related pressure is the syndrome of "beheading the bearer of bad news." The individual who turns in bad statistics is often rewarded only by admonitions to get the problem corrected. The superior is satisfied only when the "proper" reports come in and then "congratulates himself on his management ability." As a result, "command interest seems to force the problem underground or to force the people responsible for reporting to report a good story whether they have one or not."¹⁹

Military service puts a high premium on obedience and loyalty, but these virtues also can become distorted in the organization. The question arises of loyalty to whom or to

what level of organization. Success in combat and within the organization depends upon loyalty to one's commander and to the immediate members of the organization. But this loyalty becomes distorted when it overrides right and wrong or when it ignores ultimate service loyalty to the nation and commitment to the military purpose. Fear sometimes becomes the dominant motivator; "pleasing the boss" is the standard of performance. Distortion of information becomes dominant when subordinates, either willingly or unwittingly, omit negative information from reports they forward to superiors.²⁰

Drive for Success. Motivation and ambition are desirable attributes for military officers. Military exigencies seek officers who have the drive to accomplish the mission in spite of overwhelming odds, i.e., to make $2+2=5$.²¹ Yet sometimes this drive for success is oriented more toward self-aggrandizement and personal welfare than for the good of the service. The outcome is manifested as careerism, doing one's job in a manner to advance selfish ends rather than to perform a service. The careerist's primary concern becomes image as he gets preoccupied with the way things appear. The pervasiveness of careerism is encouraged by a performance evaluation system that rewards superficial indicators of worthiness and generates intense competition for recognition. Some officers become quite expert at fooling bosses who are either not able or don't try to assess the true quality of their subordinates. The methods

for evaluating leadership often concentrate on undifferentiated statistical criteria.²² The "body count" syndrome arises as individuals try to stack up the indicators that are supposed to make them look good. The emphasis on holding certain jobs often is rated higher than the actual performance. Thus, the "ticket punching" syndrome sets in as the individual tends to use his command position or high-level staff job as simply an opportunity to get credit for having "done it" and then move on to newer opportunities. The point is not that performance appraisal and competition should be eliminated. It is that we must think through the human consequences that are inherent to organizational requirements of evaluating and motivating personnel with management tools such as fitness reports.

Another influence that tends to inhibit moral development among leaders is the preoccupation with power and the perquisites of office.²³ Certainly rank has its privileges, and positions of responsibility are afforded levels of recognition not given to others. Yet we have all seen the result when officers have tried to build empires and surrounded themselves with excessive trappings of office. The result is not only an aberration of the ethic of service, but also creation of a source of resentment in subordinates who may perceive more important tasks than simply caring for their boss's welfare.

Desire for Control. A successful combat commander strives to be fully in control of his unit and cognizant of the progress of operations. Traditionally, he has exercised this control through personal supervision and familiarity with the personnel and skills that make up his command. However, in a large, complex bureaucracy, he is faced with a myriad of technology, systems and experts whose functions he cannot hope to keep up with through personal contact and understanding. Yet he may feel an obsession to know what is going on. In desperation, he turns to the tools of modern management and data processing technology and often misuses them. As pointed out by the AWC study, statistical indicators may provide "a crutch on which the inexperienced or transient commander can lean in judging his own or his subordinates' progress."²⁴ In his drive to quantify progress and compare results, he turns to those indicators which he can identify to give him the information he wants. In his desire to measure the effectiveness of accomplishment of the unit mission, he finds that the only true measure would be the test of battle. Therefore, he chooses measures that evaluate the efficiency of accomplishing intermediate tasks that approximate actual effectiveness of fulfilling ultimate objectives. Ideally, the best efficiency measures should form a composite of how well the unit is doing. In actuality, the efficiency measures typically chosen are those easiest to quantify. For example, the effectiveness of the tactical air squadron may be measured

in numbers of sorties flown per month--an efficiency measure. The squadron members soon learn that to look good all they have to do is launch a maximum number of aircraft, no matter for how long, how well, or in what condition. They are, in effect, cheating on the true intent of the measuring system; but they see themselves as "getting the job done," pleasing the commander, and gaining a high score for the squadron on its readiness report.

The AWC study found also that reliance upon status reporting tends to degenerate into a preoccupation with meaningless trivia. In his urge to find progress or meaning in extraneous detail, the commander can force a "diversion of effort from substantive matters to trivial or symptomatic indications."²⁵ He also may try to achieve control of events through certification. In order to get something done, he asks for status reports. Oftentimes, the indicators are meaningless; at other times, they involve needless detail for the level of command requesting it.²⁶ An example is the requirement to report the exact position and status of aircraft spread out among many different operations. The subordinate commanders may resist reporting such detail and find it "prudent" to pass along statistics that "answer the mail."

The attempt to "control through certification" may also have the effect of using one's honor against himself. This, particularly, can occur when the data used for assessment of unit performance are also used to evaluate the individuals

who submit the reports; it is essentially self-incrimination. The conflict occurs when officer efficiency reports are used to reflect the "progress" the individual has reported in improving the status of AWPL's, deadline rates, readiness test scores and incidence or drug use. This phenomenon, as Lewis S. Soeley writes, places a "substantial and unwise strain on the integrity of those submitting the report."²⁷

Expectations also play a significant part in the distortion of reporting procedures. Unit readiness reporting may be cited as an example.²⁸ Units often are reported as ready for combat when the individuals involved know that such is not the case. Why do they do it? Maybe because "everybody else does it." In many cases, the Zero Defects syndrome plays a part. In the Air Force, it has frequently become unacceptable for a unit to report any aircraft as NORS (Not Operationally Ready for Supply).²⁹ In any of the services, one may find examples of requirements being satisfied simply by submitting reports of task accomplishment. Often, General Military Training is administered by false reports of 100% completion of first aid, aerobics, race relations seminars, etc. Possibly an attentive subordinate was trusted to "take care" of the GMT requirements.³⁰

The problem of expectations is seen also in officer efficiency reports. The norm has become to rate nearly every officer with a near perfect score. Reporting officers acknowledge that the scores are inaccurate but hesitate to "hurt" the

subordinate with a truer rating. The reporter is caught in a dilemma , but the fact still remains that he submits an incorrect official report. The erosion of standards of honesty in those cases builds into a more pervasive system of disregard for integrity in all cases.

Organizational Pressures. The pressures and pace of work routine in the modern military establishment put strains on officers to a much greater degree than in the past. In the inter-World War years, officers generally experienced a leisurely style of life with the workday often ending at noon. This provided opportunities for leisure, sports and a gathering with fellow officers as compensation for the rigors of training exercises and family separations. As Janowitz notes, "If military honor required gentlemen as professionals, the military occupation made it possible for the officer to have a gentlemen-like routine."³¹ Nowadays, officers occupy positions which subject them to a harried routine of continuous and extreme tension, attending to "crash programs" and "admin flaps." As a result, ". . . the up-and-coming officer can no longer afford to behave like a 'gentleman.'"³² These pressures are coupled with frequent job rotation, family separation and the threat of continued erosion of fringe benefits. The effect is to make officers more vulnerable to the types of organizational pressures that discourage ethical behavior. They may begin to compare their

status with that of their peers in civilian industry, especially now that their skills are more transferable. The result is an erosion of commitment both to the Service ethic and to professional ethical standards.

As stated earlier, the AWC study found external forces of social changes, crises and budgetary limitations not to be the primary causative factors of conditions of professional ethical behavior. On the contrary, the fault was found within the military establishment itself with the types of organizational strains outlined above. The problem so often is not organization per sé, or data-processing technology, or the use of management skills. It is, instead, the subversion of those factors, often inadvertently, by those who make policies and set requirements without considering the ethical implications of their actions.

Organization Climate

Aside from the strains and ethical dilemmas facing the professional working within a complex bureaucracy, the climate of the organization by which he senses the pressures, expectations and standards for behavior has a powerful effect on the way he regulates his own behavior. The organizational climate is manifested through accepted practices of the workplace: the trust and confidence relationships, reward systems and communications.

Accepted Practice. The ethical climate of the organization becomes important when the accepted practice within the working environment condones a level of behavior not in accordance with intended standards, and in effect, encourages unethical behavior. Ayres and Clement describe the impact of the climate within an organization as follows:

The subject of organizational ethics is pertinent if one believes that accepted practice (i.e., an amalgam of customs, precedence, pressures, attitudes, and expectations that form normative guidelines for behavior) has become a more powerful influence over individual behavior in an organization than either legal proscriptions, penalties, or formal ethical codes, thus allowing daily unethical acts to flourish.³³

A survey on business ethics and social responsibility, conducted in 1976 by the Harvard Business Review and involving 1227 readers,³⁴ found that "too often unethical practices become a routine part of doing business" within American corporations. It appeared that ethical standards had fallen since a similar study conducted in 1961 and that violations of formal norms of conduct produced less ethical discomfort. Too frequently, patterns of behavior in an organizational setting become so pervasive that an "everybody does it" atmosphere prevails, and individuals begin to think it must be acceptable to disregard moral standards. They begin to feel that the standards are obsolete or inappropriate and that the accepted practice constitutes the way things are supposed to be done.³⁵

As individuals lose touch with essential standards of morality, they equate standards of behavior not only with accepted practice, but also with conformity only to that which is regulated or set down in rules. Senator Fulbright recognized this tendency toward legalism in 1951:

One of the most disturbing aspects of this problem of moral conduct is the revelation that among so many influential people, morality has become identified with legality. We are certainly in a tragic plight if the accepted standard by which we measure the integrity of a man in public life is that he keeps within the letter of the law.³⁶

There are two major factors affecting whether accepted practice encourages a climate of unethical behavior within military organizations: command emphasis and the degree of tolerance exercised by the profession itself. The commander sets the tone for conduct in his unit and helps to create the expectations for the type of behavior that is condoned. We will discuss this role of the commander further below. Toleration of misconduct by professional peers also plays a critical role. A profession is expected to regulate the conduct of its own members or lose a measure of its autonomy. Many have criticized the nontoleration clause in the U.S.M.A. honor code as being too rigid and contributing to the breakdown of its application. Yet there are too many instances in which officers observe violations of ethical standards occurring about them and out of a sense of loyalty (to individuals, not the profession) they hesitate to "rock the boat," or in

fear of personal retribution say nothing about the incidents. The matter deserves much more consideration as to what part the profession will play in policing its own members.

Trust and Confidence. It was noted earlier in this study that the armed forces officer is vested with a special trust and confidence to discharge his duties in a responsible and honorable manner. Yet there is a tendency for commanders to try to establish control over events and behavior and to ensure compliance with organizational expectations by establishing certain procedures, regulations and supervision. However, the wholesale application of those measures may have the adverse effect of eroding the trust and confidence of the officers they affect.

In many small matters, officers are not afforded the special trust due them. There are many cases of excessive certification, safesiding and overmanagement, such as: requirements to show proof of ownership and insurance to register an automobile; procedures that require a clerk to inspect an officer's BOQ room before he checks out; and procedures that officers' names be compared with a "bad check" list before cashing a check. These practices effectively withdraw trust from all to lower the standards to protect against the actions of a few. Thus, the system refuses to trust officers in small matters although their commissions place them in trust of enormous responsibilities.

It is a great inconsistency to deny officers simple trust. When the leadership of the organization refuses to trust them in small matters, can it, as John D. Kindred asks, "be certain that they will give their full devotion and effort when the chips are down?"³⁷ The tendency, instead, has been to react to the transgressions of a few by creating rules to try to prevent reoccurrence rather than prosecuting individual offenders. A special Army Trust Review Group contends that:

. . . long ago the bad check artist should have been driven from the temple; instead it was much easier for the Army to design a worldwide stamp which proclaims to the world that a commissioned officer is so dishonest that legal stipulations must be signed by him before a check will be cashed.³⁸

The effect is that the impact of the dishonorable act is borne by the officer corps as a whole rather than the perpetrator of the act. Both the ethical and unethical are treated as dishonorable. The result is to encourage the officer to conform only to the level of confidence placed in him.³⁹

In 1978, the Army recognized the negative side effects that such procedures might have and formed the Trust Review Group "to review Army Regulations and eliminate, where appropriate, those policies which undermine the special trust and confidence reposed in officers." The Trust Review encompassed 1444 Army Regulations and identified 197 issues that were reported to undermine officer trust. As a result, 66 of the issues were recommended for modification or elimination

as representing either infringement of trust or unsound management practice. Some others were recommended for retention as they were based on sound management practices or other overriding considerations. A number of other policies were changed during the course of the study simply because the "dynamics of issue identification and evaluation often neutralized issues."⁴⁰ The results of the review established the guidance that Army policy should not attempt to prescribe officer conduct for all situations, but should provide the guidelines on the basic tenet that officers ought to have "the ability to apply general rules to specific situations." Ancillary benefits included promoting awareness of seriousness of officer integrity, savings in time and effort as a result of eliminating unnecessary administrative certification, and increased authority for noncommissioned officers by "minimizing officer overmanagement."⁴¹

Reward System. Another cause of unethical behavior within the organization may be that sanctions reinforce conduct in such a fashion as to encourage the wrong kind of behavior. There are numerous studies of the business community which demonstrate that ethical conduct is influenced by modern management practices and senior-subordinate relationships.⁴² Business managers often feel pressured to compromise personal moral standards to satisfy organizational expectations.⁴³ Often, it is the behavior of supervisors that results in perceived or actual pressures toward unethical subordinate

behavior--to support incorrect viewpoints, sign false documents, overlook supervisors' wrongdoings, or do business with supervisors' friends.⁴⁴ Similar pressures have been reported in the military environment. Army Leadership Monograph Number 13 has summarized these findings of the AWC Study:

The U.S. Army War College Study (1970) indicated clearly that problems existed in the reward and punishment system in the U.S. Army. The complaint of varying standards (e.g., unequal and unrealistic workload) was ranked 5th, acceptance of substandard performance (e.g., tolerating mediocrity), was ranked 7th, and the Army system of rewards (e.g., rewarding short-term results at the expense of long-term development in human values; giving out important awards without justification; failing to punish offenders for obvious and serious violation of standards) was ranked 8th on a list of 11 themes of divergence from ideal standards. In addition, unconditional loyalty to one's boss was cited as a cause by 108 out of 145 respondents. The second most common solution to eradicating varying standards (proposed by 200 out of 415 respondents) dealt with the reward system, specifically performance evaluations, promotion, assignment, selection for schooling decisions, and awards and decorations.⁴⁵

There is a general feeling among military officers that the system often condones substandard behavior and rewards relatively insignificant short-term indicators of success. In a survey conducted by a researcher at the Naval War College's Center for Advanced Research, two-thirds of the Air Force and naval officers surveyed agreed with the statement, "Too often our military system rewards those who succeed without being certain that the task was done in an honest and forthright manner."⁴⁶ Many of the interviewees believed that in order to rise to high ranks integrity must be sacrificed--

"Too much time is spent on self-aggrandizement and not enough on accomplishing the mission." Reporting procedures were most frequently cited as examples of pressure to compromise. An inquiry into the resignations of an unusually large number of officers from the U.S.M.A. class of 1966 reported that several of them felt that in the Army, senior officers:

. . . were forced to abandon their scruples and ignore the precepts of duty and honor; and if necessary to lie and cheat in order to remain successful and competitive. . .⁴⁷

The perception that unethical conduct goes unpunished is, in many cases, justified. Inspector General reports are replete with instances where units were inspected and their status reports training tests, unit readiness, NORS, etc. were found to be "highly inaccurate."⁴⁸ The units generally were penalized for actually having a lower status but only chastised for the inaccurate reports. It is rare that we ever see a commander relieved because he misrepresented his true status in an official statement. It is little wonder that the prevalence of inflation and misrepresentation is so great in the reporting system when there is so little risk involved.

The problem also is evidently not just a practice that goes on at lower echelons without cognizance at higher levels. The perception, at least, is that the higher one goes, the greater the tendency to be unethical and the less the consequences. One of the most frequent complaints cited in the AWC

Study was the feeling that the higher an officer's rank, the less the likelihood he would be punished if he were to transgress.⁴⁹ This perception of an asymmetrical relationship between accountability and rank sends the wrong signals to junior officers who are looking to their superiors for professional guidance. Granted, there are reassurances that many generals and admirals have been quietly cashiered for failing to uphold the standards of the profession. Yet that approach is part of the problem. Unless the lowest levels of the officer corps receive the clear and unequivocal evidence that the highest levels are serious about the ethical standards of the profession, we cannot hope to impose any different code of behavior on them.

Communication. Often the perception of pressure to be unethical is just that--only a perception and possibly an erroneous one. The superior may not realize what message he is conveying and subordinates may be reaching false conclusions. A survey of business leaders revealed that middle and low-level managers perceive pressure to compromise moral standards more than the top leadership.⁵⁰ Possibly there is inadequate upward communication for the superior to get feedback on how his intentions are interpreted. Also, there is the fact that the nonverbal portion of a message may communicate the real impact to the organization. Just as accepted practice may constitute a more effective guide for ethical conduct than formal codes, the manner in which a superior

conveys his intentions and priorities may have much more to say than the rhetoric of high ideals he espouses.

Consequences of Environmental Factors. The overall climate of norms, accepted practice, pressures, reward and punishment, and responsibility in an organization has a powerful effect on the motivation of the individual to act in certain ways. The climate that fosters inaccurate reporting, self-aggrandizement and disregard of the service commitment not only interferes with mission accomplishment, but also, as noted by the AWC study:

. . . impacts on the long term ability of the armed forces to fight and win because it frustrates young, idealistic, energetic officers who leave the service and are replaced by those who will tolerate if not condone ethical imperfection . . .⁵¹

We should recognize those environmental factors that place strains on the integrity of the individual by virtue of his position in a bureaucratic organization. To the extent possible, we should seek to ameliorate the dilemmas involved. Yet many of the factors I have discussed are inherent to the work environment. This requires us to trust the moral strength of the individual to overcome those strains. Therefore, we should be cautious in giving too much importance to environmental factors and the impact of reward and punishment. In both the 1951 and 1976 honor scandals at West Point, much was made of the Academy's giving cadets the opportunity to cheat and of the heavy pressures bearing on the cadets.

In concluding that the ethical strain was too great, a ready solution appeared to be to take away the opportunity to cheat, such as placing more supervision over examinations. That solution brings us full circle back to the trust and confidence investment in the individuals. Certainly there are unreasonable strains that should be removed, but we must get accustomed to the fact that there will always be strains of some sort. We have to accept a certain amount of risk for every officer rather than expecting to preclude all dishonest activity.

Another caveat about reward and punishment is that we should avoid creating the impression that all honest behavior will be rewarded and dishonest acts will be sanctioned. Responses to surveys showed a strong desire on the part of many officers to create such an ideal situation. The officer has to learn that, to a certain extent, life is not fair. However, that fact of life does not absolve individual responsibility to rise above the pressures and temptations of everyday life and maintain one's personal sense of integrity in spite of the odds. Ward Just, in describing the ordeals of Sam Damon in Once an Eagle, relates the lesson to the military situation:

. . . life is a struggle to maintain personal honor and individual courage against the stupidities and caprices of the organization. He who struggles attains a luster that nothing can dim - and what is war anyway but a hideous business in which the fight is to maintain life amid death, to place duty and honor ahead of everything else; duty, honor, country.⁵²

CHAPTER V

UNDERSTANDING THE ETHICS PROBLEM:

THE MILITARY PROFESSION AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

So far I have discussed the role of the professional military officer working within the confines of a large, complex bureaucracy and the ethical strains placed upon him in that internal environment. Now I return to the environment external to the profession--the relationship of the profession to its client, society; the way the officer perceives himself as an instrument of service to the nation; and how he interprets the purpose and ideology of the military profession itself.

Military-Societal Strains

The officer's commitment to his profession and the military ethic cannot be divorced from his relationship to society. I discussed the debate of isolation vs. convergence in Chapter III, but the issue is not so much the degree of closeness of the military profession to society as it is the way in which the public and the military view each other and the effect of those views upon the self-esteem and dedication of the military profession.

There is an inherent strain in the relationship of the military to society. The military profession is both a part of society and apart from it. While the military profession

has been developing skills more like those of civilian professions and increasing its contacts with the public and private sectors, it clings to certain traits that set it apart. As Janowitz observes,

the development of a rational approach to innovation cannot supplant an uncritical willingness to face danger - the essence of the martial spirit....Military managers - in the ground, air, and naval forces - are aware that they direct combat organizations. They consider themselves to be brave men, prepared to face danger...As a result, the military profession is confronted with a persistent dilemma, and this dilemma is deepened by the growth of automated warfare. The profession must recruit and retain officers who are skilled in military management for its elite, but, at the same time, many of its officers, including the most conspicuous ones, must be able to perpetuate the traditions of the heroic leader.¹

There are many who say that military values are fundamentally different from those of American society and in many cases in conflict with, or subject to, dilution by those societal values.² The military usually is characterized as a group-oriented system with strong emphasis on authoritarianism and hierarchy, rigid discipline and obedience, unit loyalty, willingness to enter combat and unquestioning patriotism. The societal value system, on the other hand, is characterized as individualistic, with emphasis on egalitarianism, humanism, practicality, freedom, democracy and an inquiring spirit. These value distinctions may provide a rough approximation of the differences between military and civilian outlooks if one had to place the two on points of a continuum. However, it would certainly be difficult to attribute a single set of

values to our pluralistic society and even the military profession would defy depiction as conforming to a distinct, unified value system. The distinction of individualism vs. group orientation, though, holds some validity. Our political-economic system is based on individualism, whereas one of the core military values is corporateness or concern for the group over individual welfare. As a result, the military establishment maintains a certain uniqueness and sense of apartness from society.

The military establishment is, in many respects, a closed community with its own lifestyle, jargon, customs and self-support. It is basically a miniature of the greater social system with its own transportation, education, legal, engineering, health service and retail sales systems, along with laundries, bakeries and cafeterias. Military personnel feel motivated to remain apart from the local communities when they have cheaper or more convenient access to adequate base housing, theaters, clubs, exchanges and commissaries. Detailed regulation of the military style of life also, as Janowitz points out, has helped "to enhance group cohesion, professional loyalty, and maintain the martial spirit."³

This separation from society and emphasis on the corporate spirit have enabled military officers to regard themselves as maintaining a certain purity apart from the public. In a limited survey of 153 Army officers in three locations, Clotfelter and Peters found that the officers tended to think of themselves as distinct from the larger society and to believe that

military values of sacrifice, loyalty and commitment made them superior as a group to the rest of society.⁴ In another survey, Rodney V. Cox found that the overwhelming bulk of officers believed that the values of discipline, sacrifice and patriotism were more prevalent in the military than in U.S. society. They expressed a strong feeling that the "military is the one remaining stronghold for those traditional values."⁵

These attitudes provide a beneficial reinforcement to the professional esprit de corps unless they reach the point of contributing to a sense of alienation from society. Cox found also that the majority of respondents felt that they were not appreciated by society, that they were given low status, and that present civil-military relations are characterized by alienation. But there is more to the feeling of alienation by the military profession than a current sense of superiority. One historian argues that this feeling of alienation from society is nothing new but has been reflected throughout the nonwartime periods of our history:

. . . With the society at large usually preoccupied with other problems rather than military defense, the feeling has usually reflected reality, and the Army usually has been rightly or wrongly, in fact, a neglected stepchild.⁶

Cox found in his survey that a frequently attributed cause of the alienation from society was "the trauma inflicted on the military by the Southeast Asia experience."⁷ Most officers, in spite of what their personal attitudes toward the

Vietnam War may have been, resented being blamed by some of the public for military policy that was beyond their control.

Josiah Bunting expresses the frustration this way:

In Vietnam, for example, the Army was charged with prosecuting a war for which it had not been trained to fight, in support of an ally it did not trust, and for which its attitude has generally been one of great cynicism, for a cause it did not understand and in many instances ignored when it did understand it, and without the firm support of a civilian public whose interests it was supposed to be representing.⁸

Some believe that an outgrowth of the sentiment against involvement in Vietnam has been a shift in the dominant mood of the country to include a view of the military establishment as a threat to democracy, or at least as an anachronistic extravagance.⁹ This view has been coupled with increased public scrutiny of the armed forces through Congressional oversight and media coverage. Respondents to Cox's survey indicated another reason for the perception of low status and alienation; that was a prevalent belief that the media were "biased against the military" and an interpretation of a more antimilitary sentiment in the media than actually exists.¹⁰ Yet the military's feeling of antimilitary prejudice by the public appears to be greater than the evidence indicates it actually is. Other studies also show no proof of a particularly good or particularly bad image of the military on the part of society.¹¹

Dissatisfaction within the military has also been exacerbated by a perceived erosion of military benefits and job insecurities resulting from a series of reductions in force, particularly in the Army.¹² Even though military pay has gone up in recent years, many feel that the side benefits of tax-free housing, subsistence and medical care, as well as a generous retirement provision, are still required to free the military profession from the distracting concerns of personal welfare and allow concentration on the service aspects of the profession. There is some fear that insecurities and resentment, generated by attacks on military benefits, may lead to politicization or unionism as the armed forces try to fight for their welfare. At any rate, the whole concern about alienation highlights the potential for erosion of the service ethic and of the adherence of the military profession to its fundamental values.

Yet the perception of alienation is not the only challenge of current civil-military relations. While some may desire that the military withdraw into isolation to protect its values, the fact is that the military has, in many respects by necessity, been drawn into an unprecedented degree of societal interaction. The Air Force in particular has developed a "distinct military organizational style" because it is organized around highly technical aerospace weapon systems with relatively few officers devoted to the distinct "warrior" specialty. The style is "more civilian, less authoritarian, and less bound by custom and tradition."¹³

A dominant trend that has come with the increased sophistication of military technology is interpenetration of the civilian and military sectors. Not only have military personnel acquired skills similar to those of industry, but civilians have assumed an ever-increasing role within the military establishment. This includes not just civilian employees in office or staff jobs. An increasing number of civilians have assumed essentially military tasks at much higher salaries. These include: "tech reps" permanently assigned to warships and army units to provide technical skills without which the weapon systems would be combat-ineffective, contract civilians performing maintenance and assembly in major depots, civilian-manned missile warning systems in Greenland, and private companies contracted to provide military training along with U.S. military advisors in Saudi Arabia.

The economy today is more involved than ever before in military production during peacetime. Much has been made of the so-called military-industrial complex, but it is indisputable that a great number of industries and jobs are highly dependent upon the military. And more significant to military professionals' concerns, the services are greatly involved in monitoring defense research, development, and acquisition, even to the point of having officers monitor specific contracts and projects while stationed within some of the industries.

The challenge to the military profession is to preserve its own distinctiveness and core values while, at the same

time, learning to cope with a necessary working relationship with a public that may not always provide the support and recognition the military feels it deserves. The interpenetration of civil and military functions may well place officers in positions where they encounter strains to their integrity never experienced in the purely military setting. Increased contact with civilian lifestyles and relationships may contribute to an erosion of officers' corporate identity with their profession and units. The perception of inadequate benefits and recognition for military service may lessen the dedication and commitment essential to the concept of duty. These are the ethical dilemmas of civil-military relations. To one extent, the military profession is estranged from the public; to another, it is thoroughly intermixed.

The Military Way vs. Militarism

Another problem of the isolation or alienation of the military profession from society is the withdrawal into militarism or the distortion of military dedication and expertise. The military way, as described by Alfred Vagts:

. . . is marked by a primary concentration of men and materials on winning specific objectives of power with the utmost efficiency, that is, with the least expenditure of blood and treasure. It is limited in scope, confined to one function, and scientific in its essential qualities.

Militarism, on the other hand, presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions, and thoughts associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes. Indeed militarism is so constructed that it may hamper and defeat the purposes of the military way.¹⁴

The military way is concerned with the national preparation for and humane use of materials and forces in the conduct of war decided upon by the civil authority of the state, while militarism is more concerned with the self-glorification and personal advancement through warfare or posturing for war. The military way emphasizes that the true purpose of armies is war and the maintenance of the state to which they belong. The penalty for militarism, according to Vagts, becomes technical incompetence:

An army so built that it serves military men, not war, is militaristic; so is everything in an army which is not preparation for fighting, but merely exists for diversion or to satisfy¹⁵ peacetime whims like the long-anachronistic cavalry.

A number of critics have claimed that the careerism and scandals that occurred during the Vietnam War had their roots in civilianization of the armed forces. However, many of the manifestations of those problems more resemble the nonprofessional trait of militarism. Many incidents have been recounted in which commanders staged needless operations just to put on a show for superiors, careerists jumped from job to job to get their tickets punched at the expense of the troops, and officers were obsessed with "just following orders," with no regard for the morality involved. These problems may be rooted not in "civilianism" or "entrepreneurialism," but in what Vagts describes as the other extreme of the spectrum--militarism:

Militarism is thus not the opposite of pacificism; its true counterpart is civilianism. Love of war, bellicosity, is the counterpart of the love of peace, Pacificism; but militarism is more, and sometimes less, than the love of war.¹⁶

General David M. Shoup, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, claims that a "new American Militarism" has created "a military task force" type of diplomacy in ". . . the tradition of our more primitive, pre-World War II 'gunboat diplomacy'."¹⁷ He feels this militarism helped "steer us into the tragic military and political morass of Vietnam." Although there are some soldiers who have not relished "the blood, terror, and filth of battle . . .," he says, there are ". . . many, however, including far too many senior professional officers [for whom] war and combat are an exciting adventure, a competitive game, and an escape from the dull routine of peacetime."¹⁸ According to General Shoup, their influence in Vietnam was felt in the wasteful interservice rivalry; for example, ". . . the Navy carrier people and the Air Force initiated a contest of comparative strikes, sorties, tonnage dropped, 'killed-by-air' claims, and target grabbing which continued up to the 1968 bombing pause."¹⁹

The point of this exposition of militarism is that when we complain about careerism and other distortions of professional commitment, we should consider that there could be many different sources of the problem. One cause could be, as some critics ceaselessly argue,²⁰ a preoccupation with civilian or entrepreneurial concerns. On the other hand, it

could result from just the opposite, a distortion of military values; that is, militarism. Still, the cause may be ordinary selfishness as well.

Strategic Purpose

The military profession derives its sense of purpose and ultimately its dedication from the clear understanding that it is the provider of the external security of the nation. Indications from the commentary among today's officers are that there is confusion about the purpose of the armed forces as an instrument of national policy. The many questions that have been raised about military purpose, national objectives and public support have had a profound effect upon the military profession in terms of its professional ethic. There is a feeling, again reflecting an idyllic past, that the officer used to know where he stood, that his role was more distinct. When the nation went to war, it gave the armed forces maximum support. The object of war was victory or destruction of the enemy forces. Once begun, there was no further quibbling about whether or not the cause was just. The feeling is that military men, during recent years, have been faced with moral dilemmas of fighting wars that are not wars but police actions.

For example, Major General Robert N. Ginsburgh, USAF (Ret.), states that the concept of limited war, as opposed to victory, involves officers in the moral question: "How can a commander morally send men to their possible death if victory

is not the object for which the war is being waged?"²¹ Aside from the obvious question of the morality of war involved here,²² there is an implicit assumption that the concept of limited war itself involves a moral problem. However, my contention is that it is not the existence of limited war that poses the moral dilemma, but the failure to reconcile military purpose with American values in instances of limited war.

As a nation, we traditionally have been confused about the dichotomy of war and peace and have misunderstood Clausewitz's famous dictum about war as an extension of policy with an admixture of other means.²³ This confusion is perhaps understandable, considering our past. In the first half of this century, particularly, we became accustomed to war in its total form. We witnessed war and peace as opposite conditions, rather than as poles on a continuum of international relations.²⁴ As a result, we tended to obscure the political purposes in war by absolutizing the aim as "total" victory. American sentiment toward war has been to view it as either "a crime or a crusade."²⁵ This view has led our citizenry to look upon the military, in peacetime, as a necessary evil while--at least through World War II--in wartime as heroes. Both the public and the military were unprepared to cope with the perplexities of the Cold War.

During the 1950s, the traditional dichotomy between war and peace merged into the realization of a "new stress on a

continuum of conflict from war to peace and on the role of force as an instrument of policy and diplomacy."²⁶ The distinctions between purely political and purely military functions became blurred as we recognized the interrelated dimensions of national security policy. The truce negotiations in Korea in 1951 effectively shattered the illusion of an exclusion between war and politics when, as LTG Robert Gard writes :

. . . the objective of military operations ceased to be solely the destruction of the enemy forces in order to remove their capacity to resist; instead the employment of force was closely controlled to convey a diplomatic message.²⁷

More recently, we have experienced the erosion of Cold War blocs from a system of opposing ideological and military camps toward one of greater diversity and more uncertainty, toward a more flexible system requiring a security policy of "bargaining, hedging, and attempts to prevent unfavorable shifts in a more complex and fluid system."²⁸ The array of concepts, such as nuclear war, limited war, containment, deterrence, coalition warfare, etc., has, according to LTG Gard, necessitated a redefinition of the traditional concept of military victory to "the achievement of a satisfactory political outcome."²⁹

The Clausewitzian concept of using armed force as an extension of policy, as Peter R. Moody, Jr., observes, ". . . has been generally repugnant to the liberal, and particularly to

the American temper."³⁰ The military, in turn, has been troubled by the circumscription of war effort to explicitly limited arms under constraints that it could not easily understand and has come to resent.³¹ These issues became most contentious in the debates over Vietnam and have left wounds in our civil-military relations still unhealed. Yet, the issues of military purpose have become no more clear. We are experiencing increased national self-doubts about purpose, ideology and will. There is criticism of a lack of clearly defined national objectives, but a deeper, more serious lack of consensus of what they should be. There are increasing doubts about the effectiveness of military power in achieving political objectives or resolving conflicts. There are widespread doubts within the public about the morality of the use of force and the maintenance of an active military capability in a supposed era of detente. A new antiestablishment attitude treats the armed forces not just as a disagreeable, necessary evil, but as reactionary, oppressive, and ". . . a wasteful, unproductive drain of substantial resources better used to meet pressing social problems."³²

The phenomenon taking place has been described by the sociologist, Jacques van Doorn, as the decline of the mass army in the West. At a time when peacetime armed forces and military expenditures in Western nations are higher than ever, van Doorn speaks of a decline of the mass army--namely the trend away from general conscription to voluntary forces and the declining legitimacy of armed forces with the public:

It appears that the Western world has now reached a historic stage in which the mass army as an institution is on the way out....The armed forces have steadily evolved into an instrument of deterrence with a high degree of technical specialization that has limited attraction for the young people of today....The armed forces are consequently inclined to monopolize and professionalize the use of force, which they are also capable of doing. This in turn gives rise to a preference for volunteer forces and for a general reduction in the armed forces.³³

Sam C. Sarkesian, a retired military officer, sees an ethical dilemma for the profession arising from societal disenchantment with the military establishment:

. . . As long as a war or threat of war existed, the professional mystique sufficed to provide cohesion within the profession and rationalization for institutional peculiarities and privileges. But problems emerge when wars cease or when people perceive that wars are unlikely or unnecessary; or when society becomes increasingly egalitarian and democraticized - or when all of these occur. Then the moral and ethical values of society may change and the worship of the military hero ceases. Society may demand a new justification for the military institution. It is just such an environment that has emerged in the post-Vietnam era.

. . .

. . . Shorn of its professional mystique, the military faces a dilemma. The very essence of professionalism is social legitimacy and service to the state. How can the profession maintain its uniqueness, its *élan*, in a society that is indifferent to the military institution's primary purpose.³⁴

Janowitz regards this dilemma as combining with the trend to modern rationality and industrial efficiency to create a strain on traditional concepts of authority. The very purposes and ideology of the profession are being challenged by the critical attitude that accompanies the growth of rationalism in the military establishment:

. . . The organizational revolution in the military establishment contributes heavily to the pressure for an ideological doctrine. Once authority has shifted from domination, the professional officer, not only at the highest ranks, but down to the tactical level, feels more and more obliged to have an answer to the question of why we fight. In short, the traditional answers of patriotic dogma and traditional authority are insufficient and therefore a powerful concern has developed for an ideology and rationale of purpose.³⁵

The real challenge to the military profession involves the conflict between military-operational responsibilities and clarification of its proper role in the national security policy process. The professional officer must accept some flexibility and some ambiguity with respect to the goals, priorities and personnel policies that guide his career. Already the post-World War II environment of nuclear deterrence, limited war, technological advances and domestic political pressures have forced the military professional to be educated and reeducated in the changing jargon and new forms of strategy. The new requirements cannot help but affect his professional norms, values and self-image.³⁶

The dimensions of this new challenge of military professionalism has been described aptly by Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard:

. . . The demands of national security preclude the military professional from restricting his peacetime activity to preparation for war. No longer can he abstain from, or minimize participation in, policy formulation; nor can he limit himself to traditionally narrow considerations. The military profession cannot escape the requirement to attain high levels of capability in analytical, technical, and managerial skills

not considered until recently to be primary military responsibilities. And in applying military resources, the military professional must learn to integrate operations more effectively with political, economic, social, and psychological measures. Military force must be employed in a manner consistent with societal values; for in modern democracies, legitimacy of means has become a paramount factor.³⁷

CHAPTER VI

UNDERSTANDING THE ETHICS PROBLEM:

THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICER

We have met the enemy, and they
is us.

Pogo, by Walt Kelly

Any study of professional ethical behavior must finally leave the more abstract concepts of the profession, the bureaucracy and the society and return to the central actor involved the individual officer. Studies of officers' attitudes indicate that the military officers themselves consider the subject of ethical standards an important one. They are aware of the corrosive effect that ethical violations can have upon the effectiveness and reputation of the armed forces. They resent the fact that unprofessional behavior is too often condoned, and that sanctions are too rarely applied to offenders. Conspicuous, however, is the fact that most officers generally see the problem as being the behavior of "others," while they are quite satisfied with their own conduct.

Ayres and Clement, in reviewing the results of surveys of military leaders and a number of similar surveys conducted in the business community, found that :

respondents to survey questions generally report less confidence in others' propensity to act ethically. Clearly, a discrepancy exists between self-perceptions and the perceptions of others' intentions.... In general, respondents report their own behavior as quite ethical, but the behavior of others as less ethical.... The fact,

that varying perceptions exist is a finding deserving further analysis. It may be that leaders think they are behaving ethically but that others (e.g., peers, subordinates) do not perceive their actions as ethical. The suggestions that people may be blind to their own behavior, or that they receive no feedback about others' perceptions of their behavior merit study. Clearly, it seems necessary to emphasize self-scrutiny to a greater degree.¹

Ayres and Clement further describe this phenomenon as the tendency toward a "they" syndrome in identifying the source of the ethics problem.² "They," as a nebulous entity, create the pressures and devise the policies that cause unethical conduct. "They" don't enforce the standards or punish offenders.

This tendency is illustrated by an incident involving a professor at the Naval War College who had been encountering the "they" syndrome repeatedly in student seminars on ethics. When he was asked to conduct a discussion forum with a group of one- and two-star generals and admirals, he assumed he finally had "they" in his class. But the discussion quickly got around to a new "they" being the problem. So he asked them just who "they" were. Their answer--the three-star generals and admirals!

The buck can be passed only so far uphill until it loses accountability. We must realize the lesson of Pogo that "they" are "us." Every military officer is a part of the problem. We commit the unprofessional acts; we write the policies that cause conflicts of interest; we set the example for peers and

subordinates; and, most important, we tolerate the deviations around us and then try to claim helplessness in doing anything about them. The role of the individual officer in affecting ethical conduct can be illustrated in the issues of role modeling and toleration.

Ayres and Clement, in developing A Leadership Model for Organizational Ethics,³ drew upon social learning theory to contend that individual behavior in the organization is heavily influenced by role models, particularly in the person of highly visible leaders. Subordinates look to their superiors for keys to the criteria to open the gates to successful advancement. They gauge the leader's prejudices, values and dislikes in order to "play it safe" and increase their chances for promotion. Newly arrived personnel are particularly susceptible to the example set by their superiors. When they enter an organization, they immediately try to assess the standards, values and norms of conduct expected of them.

A 1971 survey of managers' attitudes on business ethics revealed that superiors' ethical conduct ranked second to personal moral codes as most influential in promoting ethical decisions among subordinate executives. Superiors' behavior ranked first in influencing unethical decision making. A 1977 replication of the survey indicated that conduct of superiors remained highest in influencing unethical behavior while the three most significant factors contributing most to ethical behavior were adverse effect of public disclosure, heightened

public awareness of business ethics, and increased government regulations.⁴ Ayres and Clement conclude that:

ethical role modeling is critical to maintaining high ethical standards. There appears to be a built-in tendency to depend on and to conform to the wishes of one's boss. In addition, unethical behavior of peers and superiors tends to promote unethical behavior.... The contentions are that a tendency exists in every age group and at every level to accept the values of one's superiors, and that managers/leaders subconsciously impose their value system on their subordinates. Leaders serve as a key reference group. In fact, it is asserted that people new to an organization will internalize expectations and standards early by identifying with veteran managers or those perceived to have substantial power and status.⁵

The Army War College study provides additional support for the importance of role modeling within the military organization. Many of its respondents tied the pressures tempting junior officers toward unethical acts to techniques and policies either initiated or condoned by senior officers. The following excerpts illustrate the point:

. . . Every junior officer that we talked to was looking so strong at their senior officers for a standard that they could follow that it almost hurt...the number of times that they felt they had been let down by looking for higher standards from the senior officers and not finding them. [sic] - Field Team Comment.⁶

. . . My superior was a competent, professional, knowledgeable military officer that led by fear, would double-cross anyone to obtain a star, drank too much and lived openly by no moral code. He is now a B.G. - Army Major Comment.⁷

. . . Senior officers seem to live under the standard of 'do as I say, not as I do.' In my last assignment I witnessed senior officers doing things that if done by an enlisted man would result in courts-martial charges. - Army Captain Comment.⁸

. . . I was distraught after the first two sessions because of the leadership that apparently my grade 0-6 is failing to give the young officers in the United States Army. The junior officers are enthusiastic. They have high standards, be they actual standards or ideals. They come in with this, and it's up to us, I think, to foster the growth of these standards. The discussions pointed out to me that we, the upper and senior grades, have failed to foster⁹ the growth of these standards - Team Member Comment

The higher in rank an officer rises, the more important becomes the manifestation of his own personal morality, mainly because of the increased attention payed to his every action by subordinates. There are those who claim that professional ethical standards have nothing to do with personal morality. They can cite examples of individuals who are extremely strict about adherence to professional obligations, but are scoundrels in relation to their marriages or off-duty life. However, it is questionable how many of their subordinates those individuals are fooling. Good moral character has been cited, along with good sense and good will, as determining factors in a leader's credibility, and integrity has been found to be a direct determinant of success in subordinate development efforts.¹⁰ Furthermore, the higher one's position becomes, the more visible his private and public conduct tends to be. With each promotion, the leader's behavior is increasingly constrained as subordinates and associates expect him to conform to some ideal stereotype. As Ayres and Clement write:

whether or not top-level leaders like it, they have very little private life at the top. Along with the perquisites of position come more stringent expectations to 'set an example,' probably off the job as well as on. ...Very rarely, however, is it made clear that one's

behavior is increasingly delimited once he or she reaches the middle-management levels.¹¹

Another area for the individual officer to have a major effect upon the ethical conduct of the profession is in the extent to which he tolerates the unprofessional behavior of others. The very essence of the autonomy of a profession is self-regulation. If we cannot police the conduct of our fellow officers and uphold the special trust and confidence vested in us, then we invite public condemnation followed by some form of regulation through the Congress, the media and civilian superiors. Yet there have been allegations that officers have not lived up to their reputation for bravery and moral steadfastness by taking the personal risk of opposing unethical behavior or refusing to carry out immoral commands. This point is made by Bradford and Brown:

Very few in the officer corps 'stood up to be counted' on the inadequacies of the overly detailed Army Training Test in Europe or on body count, base camp luxuries, or other legacies of peacetime which followed to Vietnam [sic] - legacies of the hypocrisy of 'looking good' or the cheery "Can Do" as a sign of alert readiness despite the hidden costs of troop time. Even worse, many tolerated the quibbling of a reporting system conditioned to tell the commander what he wanted to hear.¹²

Likewise, Flammer writes:

Indeed, I know of no single instance where moral courage on the part of more than a few of the military professionals played a significant part in correcting a major defect in the system or corrected a major injustice, despite the fact that moral courage is, in theory, encouraged in the military.¹³

Perhaps one of the greatest mysteries of the military profession is the fact that so often the officer who is willing to sacrifice his life in combat is hesitant to risk his career to correct an abuse in the system, to suffer embarrassment by speaking out for justice, or to stand firm on moral standards when the accepted practice follows a discordant tune. This paradox of bravery was noted by Michael Maccoby in his exhaustive psychoanalytic study of business managers in their work environments.¹⁴ He concluded that bravery consists of two different character traits of courage and guts:

. . . both courage and guts require bravery, but courage also implies more human qualities. Hardhearted fanatics or amoral secret agents might have guts. Unlike the root of courage, the concept of guts has a quality of adolescent toughness, like a strong stomach . . .

Guts may drive a young man to charge into a line in a football game or to dive from the high board. But if he risked his life for his friends, we would say that he acted out of courage, even though it would be clear that such bravery required guts. Courage implies conviction. It may mean risking deep pain--contempt, rejection, loneliness--by expressing the truth to another person . . . In contrast to guts, courage implies commitment to self (integrity) and to other people.¹⁵

Maccoby found that even in the business world, the individual who may be so ready to display his macho gift of guts is afraid to stand up in front of his fellow executives and demonstrate his commitment to integrity. He also determined that corporate work stimulates and reinforces attitudes essential for intellectual innovation and teamwork or "qualities of the head," as he called them. On the other hand,

"qualities of the heart" remain unneeded and undeveloped.

These he described as independence, loyalty to fellow workers, critical attitudes to authority, friendliness, sense of humor, openness, honesty, compassion, generosity and idealism.¹⁶

The situation is similar to that described earlier as the dilemma of the role of the professional officer vs. career bureaucrat. Being a brave combat leader does not guarantee that an officer will have the courage to overcome pressures to behave unethically in a bureaucracy. It all comes down to his personal standards of integrity and his sense of conviction for his service calling.

Too often, officers ignore the influence they have upon the behavior of others or the extent to which they contribute to policy making that may have ethical implications. It is too easy to claim helplessness; that "they" are the cause of the problem. The buck is continually passed up, and the officer defers action until that mystical opportunity in the future when he will be better situated to correct the problem. This point was well made by B.H. Liddell Hart:

A different habit, with worse effect, was the way ambitious officers, when they came in sight of promotion to the general's list, would decide they would bottle up their thoughts and ideas, as a safety precaution, until they reached the top and could put the ideas into practice. Unfortunately, the usual result, after years of such self-repression for the sake of their ambition, was that when the bottle was eventually uncorked the contents had evaporated.¹⁷

I hope that I have made it evident that the problem of military professional ethics involves a complex and confusing set of issues arising from no single cause nor explainable by any simple model. Nor does it lend itself to any single cure. The problem will neither be resolved by a crash program, nor by a series of classes, nor by a crackdown on morality. In fact, many dimensions of the problem never will be cured. There are dilemmas and strains in the system that simply have to be coped with. There are increasing challenges facing the profession in clarifying its role and purpose. Most important, the officer corps is made up of human beings who are subject to mistake, temptation and misunderstanding. But the first and essential step is understanding the problem. Just facing up to the dilemmas in the system, recognizing the ethical impact of routine policies and procedures, and acknowledging the imperfections in human endeavor will aid in clarifying the problems and postulating solutions. With a more complete appreciation for the many issues, we can then go on to attack the problem with the comprehensive approach that is needed.

CHAPTER VII

TACKLING THE PROBLEM:

SOCIALIZATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER

A comprehensive approach to resolution of the problem of professional military ethical behavior most appropriately should begin with the individual officer. This involves basically a socialization process whereby the officer is inculcated with the appropriate awareness of ethical issues and understanding of putting ethics into practice, and is provided with appropriate guidance on the professional code.

Inculcation

The inculcation of professional standards should begin upon entry of the officer into the military profession. Subsequently, the nature of the inculcation should change from a prescriptive indoctrination for a new officer to a descriptive, problem-solving approach for more senior officers.

The officer candidate should be introduced to the conditions and standards of military professionalism on an "adopt them or leave" basis. As described by General Maxwell Taylor, USA (Ret.), the candidate should be warned in advance that he will have to forego many of the "cherished privileges in civilian life - uninhibited freedom of speech, participation in politics, the accumulation of wealth and its leisurely enjoyment,"¹ and to expect hardships, dangers and separation from

family. But he should also be apprised of the many advantages: responsibility, comradeship, broadening experience, work satisfaction and service. He should understand the virtues of "duty, honor, country," as well as the rewards of working with honorable men and women.

As the officer proceeds through a military career, he develops a personal identification with the military profession and internalizes the shared values and experiences of military service. He continues to need reinforcement of the service ethic, but is in a position to reflect on problem areas and apply his experience to finding solutions. Ayers and Clement have developed a detailed program for a graduated educational strategy for professional ethics.² In summary, their approach is as follows:

Precommissioning - teaching professional standards, roles and codes and providing a foundation in the behavioral sciences.

Basic - emphasis on developing the individual as an organizational being, and studying the military's interface with the societal/governmental system it serves.

Advanced - focusing professional standards through superior, subordinate and peer relationships.

Staff College - emphasis on effect of role modeling and introduction to ethics of staff work.

War College - addressing ethics of policy making and totality of role modeling in high organizational positions.

Ethics Education Program

The increasing ethical dilemmas facing the profession and the many strains upon adherence to standards necessitate the expansion of educational means to assist the officer in coping with moral issues. The Army War College study and the Drisko study both found a strong desire on the part of officers for an increased emphasis on ethics education. However, a token one-to-three hour block of instruction introduced into the major service school programs is not going to be sufficient. It will require a coherent, coordinated, and purposeful program of instruction and discussion aimed at fostering understanding and resolution of the many ethical issues facing the profession.

There are those who would argue against any attempts to try to introduce officers to the theories and techniques of ethical reasoning. They may say that to teach students to reason about moral issues will only cause them to become even more confused over what are genuine and perplexing dilemmas. However, it is better to make decisions on the basis of understanding the nuances and complexities of important human problems than to act imprudently on personal bias. Another criticism is that teaching of ethics is useless; "either you have ethics or you don't." Yet the complexity of the moral issues that confront the profession today illustrates the need for officers to develop a consistent set of ethical principles based on clear thought and concern for the needs of

others. They also are likely to be more firm in their own commitments once they have clarified their standards. We also assume that officers have a sincere commitment to moral values that will make them more alert to ethical issues and receptive to the means to explicate them more clearly.³

The typical approach to ethics instruction at the various service schools generally involves from 1½ to 4 hours of instruction in one or two sessions. In most cases, the students may attend a lecture and then receive a few selected case studies that highlight ethical dilemmas for group discussion. In reviewing the programs at Army service schools, Ayers and Clement noted that :

recent observations of these discussions at basic, advanced and staff college levels have revealed that the students: 1) lack conceptual understanding of professional ethics to address the issues substantively; and 2) lack a common vernacular to communicate on the substantive issues. This results in the group discussions degenerating into a series of "war stories" and a blaming of "them" (normally the next higher rank as a collectivity). The underlying ethical issues are frequently left undressed.⁴

Another observation about the instruction in ethical issues is that it should not be treated as a skill area.⁵ The objectives are to develop understanding and awareness of the substantive issues involved in the ethical aspects of professionalism and to provide the mental tools for analysis and resolution of problems. This involves a long-term process rather than short-term programs of skill-building modules.⁶

Derek Bok, President of Harvard University and an advocate of ethics instruction, has traced the development of moral education in American universities.⁷ In the 19th century, college presidents often lectured to senior classes expounding on then currently accepted moral principles. This was replaced by grand survey courses with lectures in moral philosophy. Their chief drawback was that they did not develop powers of moral reasoning, nor help students cope with practical moral dilemmas. Many schools of business are now developing classes around series of contemporary moral dilemmas. One goal is to help students be more alert in discovering the moral issues involved in real problems. In this case, Bok asserts that, while education will not change character:

. . . many individuals who are disposed to act morally will often fail to do so because they are simply unaware of the ethical problems that lie hidden in the situations they confront.... By repeatedly asking students to identify moral problems and define the issues at stake, courses in applied ethics can sharpen and refine the issues at stake so that they can avoid these pitfalls.⁸

A second goal to this approach is to teach students to reason carefully about ethical issues. Students are guided toward the development of a moral reasoning capability to sort out all of the arguments that bear on a particular situation and apply them to solutions. The third goal is to enable students to clarify their own moral aspirations in terms of their own value systems and satisfaction of their personal goals for behavior.

A similar approach could be introduced into the service school systems with the content matter adjusted to the rank and experience of the students. All departments of instruction should be involved in order to introduce the concerns of all aspects of military professionalism. In other words, tactics faculties could emphasize the development of military competence as an ethical dimension of the responsibility of every officer. Strategy faculties would explore the dimensions of military purpose, and management faculties could concentrate on the organizational aspects of confronting ethical issues in the military profession. Also, fundamental concepts of morality, ethics and just war theory should be covered in light of the practical realities of present-day military issues.

The quality of instruction is essential; poor instructors, as Professor Bok emphasizes, can be devastating:

. . . for it confirms the prejudices of those students and faculty who suspect that moral reasoning is inherently inconclusive and that courses on moral issues will soon become vehicles for transmitting the private prejudices of the instructor.⁹

Instructors need an adequate knowledge of moral theory and the field of human affairs which their course addresses. They must know how to conduct a rigorous class discussion addressing genuine issues without degeneration into "bull" sessions.

Other topics for study are:

American Government - to understand the constitutional system.

Liberal Arts, from anthropology to psychology - to develop understanding of values of different groups.

Histories and Biographies - to understand human experience and recurring dilemmas.

Political and Moral Philosophy - base for understanding fundamental values.

Of particular significance would be instruction in classical and contemporary moral theory. The particular value of this would be found in providing the perspective that ethical dilemmas have occurred throughout human history, and that many different solutions have been pursued by a host of wise men. The student may find that the "unique" problem he has been grappling with has confronted many people before. Most important, he can gain an appreciation of the different perspectives on means for resolving ethical issues and the wisdom of life that has provided many lessons of timeless value.

Another potentially rewarding source of insight that should not be overlooked is the extensive list of military novels that can tell us a lot about experiences and images of the military in very personal and interesting settings.¹⁰

Drisko recommends further that the service schools should develop "exportable training packages" that deal with professional military ethics for operational units.¹¹ The approach would be more pragmatic than that of the classroom orientation of the service schools. It would involve a major role for the chains of command, supplemented by formal lectures from

the schools. The format would include regular and open discussions at the unit level about ethical behavior in issues related to work. Such an approach would lend itself to integration with the organizational effectiveness process as it relates ethical issues to unit effectiveness, esprit, cohesion and solidarity.

The greatest benefit to be derived from the increased instruction in and discussion of ethical issues is the sense of awareness that it can create. Officers should become more sensitive to ethical problems that they previously may have disregarded; they should increase their awareness of the organizational and social realities that may cause ethical problems; and they should learn to understand their own roles in influencing the ethical climate. Explicitly recognizing the problem of erosion of integrity provides the benefit of widening the circle of those who concern themselves with the problem.¹² Those who design and implement management procedures should become concerned with the ethical impact of their policies. Each officer should assume responsibility to question and point out those systems that produce strains on integrity, and leaders should become sensitive to the effect of their behavior upon subordinates.

Another benefit of discussion is that the mental processes needed to resolve ethical conflicts can be exercised in a more rational setting than often occurs when confronted with the real situation. In an operational situation, ethical questions usually arise around contradictory issues that are

resolved "only in the heat of crisis and emotion."¹³ By discussing and analyzing hypothetical issues in advance, individual and group resolve would be enhanced. Even though all situations cannot be foreseen, hypothetical issues could bring to the surface the basic issues that should be considered in like circumstances. A rational discussion and examination of issues beforehand will minimize distortion and any tendency to rationalize in a moment of crisis.¹⁴

Professional Code of Ethics

At present, none of the services has a formal code of professional ethics. The various service officers' guides and The Armed Forces Officer refer repeatedly to "the code", but recite only traditions, custom, the precepts of duty, honor, country, and generally what are regarded as internalized, shared values of the officer corps. The Code of Conduct provides specific guidance for some wartime and prisoner of war situations. The Uniform Code of Military Justice and various regulations provide some legal prescriptions.

Actually, there does exist one set of regulations specifically governing conduct of an ethical nature of military personnel. This is contained in the various service regulations implementing the guidelines of Executive Order 11222 on "Prescribing Standards of Ethical Conduct for Government Officers and Employees."¹⁵ The President issued this instruction prohibiting all government employees from any action which

might result in, or create the appearance of:

- (1) using public office for private gain; .
- (2) giving preferential treatment to any organization or person;
- (3) impeding government efficiency or economy;
- (4) losing complete independence or impartiality of action;
- (5) making a government decision outside official channels; or
- (6) affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the Government.¹⁶

Each of the services' implementing regulations on standards of conduct provide very detailed guidance on the propriety of the exercise of official positions by military personnel. Yet the concerns of professional military ethics encompass an even broader area than this, and no service codes per se specifically articulate the ethical values of the military profession.

Most surveys of military personnel have revealed (along with a general frustration over a perceived erosion of ethics) a strong desire for a succinct professional code. Two-thirds of the respondents to the Drisko survey felt that the Army should have a formalized, written code of ethics.¹⁷ Some of the desire for a code stems from the frustration with the changing and unstructured nature of today's military. There

is a yearning "for new, up-to-date beacons - a military version of the Ten Commandments."¹⁸ Most of the officers in the Drisko survey found the motto, "Duty, Honor, Country" to be acceptable, but questioned its effectiveness in promoting ethical behavior. "What has emerged is a motto for the officer corps which sounds good, but isn't really accomplishing much."¹⁹

The debate over whether to have a formal code often generates considerable emotion. Some tend to treat it as if it were the only related issue. No code of ethics could be a panacea; it would have to be regarded as but one step among many in a major effort.

There are pros and cons, however, to codifying ethical behavior. Most attempts to formulate a code run the risk of being either so specific that they cannot be broadly applied or so general that they lose all meaning. Some, as General Meade points out, have a tendency to set a floor for minimum compliance:

. . . A prominent fund-raiser has a rule for all of his campaigns. He tells those involved in a fundraising effort, "Don't set a minimum, the dollar goals will be met. The problem is that minimums have a way of becoming maximums. And so it is with a code of ethics - minimums have a way of becoming maximums."²⁰

A code could serve as a disincentive to behave ethically if it fails to foster a positive sense of duty and responsibility.²¹ It could create a false sense of security and lead to encouragement of violations. Finally, and most significantly,

leaders can quickly delegitimize a code if they are perceived to be the first to violate it.²²

In spite of the limitations, there is support for a properly constructed and inspirational code. General Maxwell Taylor states that in light of the unstructured nature of the military environment today there may be need:

. . . to restate in strong and clear terms those principles of conduct which retain an unchallengeable relevance to the necessities of the military profession and to which the officer corps will be expected to conform regardless of behavioral practices elsewhere.²³

A code could help clarify thinking and convey an understanding of how core military values should be related to the contemporary military environment. It would serve to reinforce and unify professional thinking in a "shared respect for common ideals and values."²⁴ It would also benefit public regard in that "it would proclaim to the world what the military profession stands for and by what standards it accepts judgment."²⁵

Of course, any code would have to strike a balance between the specific and the general. Most appropriately, as General Taylor proposes, it could be expressed as a simple ethic "to enlist the support of the tough-minded, action-oriented profession to which it is addressed," but not so pious as to be dismissed as empty verbiage. "Thus, the language of a code would have to achieve a literary mean somewhere between that of the Beatitudes and the Military Code of Justice."²⁶

The issue of whether to have a formal code should be further examined. It should not be regarded as a panacea, but may foster a renewed commitment to a shared sense of values. Air Force General Ginsburgh has expressed the real issue at stake:

. . . The important thing is not the inability of the military profession to issue a modern Ten Commandments or a revised version of the fighting man's bible, the important thing is that the military profession is aware of the problem and is determined to grope towards a solution that is morally right, militarily sound, and socially consistent with the ethics of the American nation.²⁷

CHAPTER VIII

TACKLING THE PROBLEM:

THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

The effort to reconcile professional conduct with expected standards can go only so far with individual education and inculcation of norms and values. A major and necessary emphasis must be placed on influencing the leadership and organizational environment that affects professional behavior. A significant part of that environment involves qualities of the moral integrity and personal leadership of the individual officers--qualities that are difficult to instill. However, there are aspects that we can influence: namely, the ethical climate set by command emphasis and policies, the professional commitment instilled in officers, and accommodating mechanisms to ameliorate professional/bureaucratic strains.

Ethical Climate

Col. Malham M. Wakin, USAF, observes, regarding the military's ethical climate:

It is certainly a tenable thesis that the structure of an institution which depends critically on the acceptance of obedience as one of its highest values may place a strain on the moral integrity of its members. But structures are ultimately molded by individuals; and those individuals charged with the responsibility of guiding the institution can, if they have the wisdom and will to do so, revise institutional pressures so that

they become supportive of a healthy relationship between integrity and obedience and minimize possible conflicts which could arise between these essential attributes of the military leadership function.¹

Leadership. The task of building an organizational climate conducive to ethical behavior begins with leadership. We discussed in Chapter III the influence that the commander has in setting the moral tone of his unit. It is essential for all those in leadership positions to reawaken a spirit of integrity by the following measures:

1. Make clearly understood the organization's firm commitment to integrity.

2. Set the example: provide a "role model" for the type of ethical and dedicated conduct expected of subordinates.

3. Set priorities: make certain moral action takes precedence over task expediency.

4. Set realistic goals: eliminate the "Can Do" attitude to the degree it constrains honest admission of deficiencies.

Communications. Many problems of unethical conduct are rooted in communications deficiencies within an organization whereby subordinates are receiving the wrong signals of expected behavior or the leader is not aware of the attitudes and impressions he is conveying to others. It is essential for ethical conduct that there be reliable, understandable and open communication between junior and senior. The following measures should prove beneficial:

1. Promulgate clear, relevant, realistic and consistent policy guidance.
2. Let newly arrived personnel know immediately what is expected of them in terms of acceptable values and standards of conduct in the organization.
3. Determine what kinds of expectations are being conveyed through both verbal and nonverbal messages: find out what cues have been received by subordinates and what the interpretations are.
4. Promote an upward flow of communications. Listen to subordinates, respond to their attitudes, and encourage them to speak out when they perceive violations of standards.
5. Avoid tendency of "beheading the bearer of bad news."
6. Conduct "ethics seminars" at unit, field command and service headquarters levels.

Trust and Confidence

If you treat a man as he is, he will remain as he is; if you treat him as if he were what he could be, he will become what he could be.²

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The lesson of Goethe is that if we are going to expect officers to be trustworthy, we must treat them as such. Trust always involves a risk, but the consequences of that risk are nowhere near so severe as the erosion of commitment that could result from treating all officers according to the actual or

potential behavior of the worst. The following are recommended as measures to foster an atmosphere of trust:

1. Take the risk that individuals may occasionally behave improperly. Let it be a learning experience whereby ethical behavior is motivated for the future without stifling spontaneity and creativity.

2. Review all existing regulations, policies and practices that in effect inhibit trust in individual integrity.

Reward and Punishment. As long as there is a perception that organizational pressures promote unethical conduct and fail to discourage unethical acts, it is difficult to expect a satisfactory level of professional behavior. The system must provide the necessary positive inducements for healthy ethical decision making as well as evidence that improper behavior will not be tolerated. This should include:

1. Positive reinforcement of decisions that choose the "harder right over the easier wrong," even if just a pat on the back or verbal recognition.

2. Visible examples of sanctions, particularly at the highest levels of leadership.

3. Examination of policies and procedures to determine where unnecessary pressures for unethical conduct are created.

4. Elimination of goals for goals' sake.

5. Deemphasis of short-term trivial accomplishments; recognition of less visible long-term efforts.

In short, fostering a healthy ethical climate within an organization is a command responsibility. It involves increasing leaders' sensitivity to ethical problems, evaluation of their own values and priorities, awareness of the realities of what can and cannot be expected, and an improved understanding of the role model they project. It also involves a thorough examination of unit procedures that foster or inhibit trust and those that reinforce ethical vs. unethical behavior.

Commitment

A major element in an officer's propensity to behave ethically is his sense of commitment to the military profession and his dedication in fulfilling a service to the nation. We need to reinforce that commitment as much as feasible and to eliminate, where possible, factors that would erode the officer's sense of obligation. There is no question that a military career is fundamentally different from a civilian occupation, no matter how much some military functions have come to resemble civilian skills. Every officer who assumes a military career is aware of the "unlimited liability" clause that pledges him to readiness to lay aside all personal concerns to make the fundamental commitment of his life, if necessary. Nevertheless, he does have personal and family concerns of welfare, esteem and identity that must not be overlooked lest his sense of commitment be overly strained by those other concerns. The proper approach is to give him inspirational reinforcement of his sense of commitment while effectively managing

his career and personal needs and fortifying his self-esteem and identity with the military profession.

Inspiration. For an officer to accept the hardships and demanding routine of military life, he must be inspired by something more than material gain. There has to be an attachment to higher ideals--whether they be patriotism, honor, glory, spirituality, comraderie or whatever. Perhaps the underlying dimension is sentiment. This point was made in a quotation attributed to Napoleon by Washington Irving Chambers at the Naval War College in 1892:

Sentiment rules the world. And he who leaves it out of his calculations can never hope to lead.

It is also illustrated by Garibaldi's speech to his besieged legion in 1849:

I offer neither pay, nor quarters, nor food; I offer only hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles and death. Let him who loves his country with his heart, and not merely with his lips, follow me.³

Some have likened military service to a "calling" and its characteristics to that of a church or monastery. Although military life has its uniqueness, some would disagree that the majority of officers possess quite that degree of religious zeal. One reaction to the ideal of a calling is expressed by Major General Cecil E. Combs, USAF:

. . . The idea that a vocation, in the sense of a calling, involves a higher degree of personal commitment to some values in life worth more than life itself is an idealized approach and not entirely convincing. The idea of a "call" might be appropriate to some members of the ministry who may believe that they have had some special compulsion from on high to become ministers, but few officers would claim to have entered military service with quite any such nobility of aim.⁴

Although the military profession may not approach such an idea of a "calling," General Combs adds that the personal act of making the military a way of life must involve a high degree of commitment to unselfish purposes, as well as pride in being part of the profession, and willingness to dedicate one's active career life to it. It also includes the satisfaction of contributing to the security of the nation and the brotherhood of association with honorable people. Material benefits are essential and must be adequate if we want to retain good people who also care about their families. Yet that alone is not sufficient to attract the kind of professional officers we need. There are a number of intangible motivations that must draw officers to a higher--and, yes, sentimental--sense of dedication.

These motivating factors are difficult to define and may change with the different generations and their value systems. The young people now coming into military service are to some extent "turned off" by dogmatic causes, flag waving, romanticism and even materialism. A newly graduated officer from the Naval Academy in 1970 expressed what he thought was necessary to inspire his generation:

. . . Instead, the new image which must be projected, or at least be allowed to exist, is one which emphasizes those aspects of the military and naval professions which make them truly professions: the opportunity to work with and for people, the opportunity to influence others, the opportunity to master a discipline, and those aspects which make the military and naval professions particularly appropriate for the fulfillment of an "existential commitment"--the opportunity to develop a level of personal and professional excellence and have it meaningfully challenged in positions of responsibility, the opportunity to do battle with potentially overwhelming adversaries, and the opportunity to aid in the conquest of man's last two frontiers, space and seas. Dedicated service to our country will still follow, although the view of our role has changed.⁵

Clearly, there is need for further study of the factors that inspire and motivate military professional dedication--and not just what motivates anyone, but the motivation for the kind of people whom we want to have as military officers. Then we would be better prepared to offer the appeals to higher goals that inspire a profession of service. In the meantime, there are some steps we can take to fortify the sense of commitment in the officer corps. They should include:

1. Improved counselling system both to show junior officers they are valued members of the organization and to determine what their ideas and needs are in respect to career commitment.
2. Emphasis on enlightened leadership, recognizing the need to instill, rather than command, motivation.
3. Allowing maximum participation in implementing decisions at all levels and delegation of responsibility to lowest possible levels.

Dedicated behavior is not only a product of an inspired commitment to service; it is also a source in itself of instilling increased motivation. That is, association with an organization in which an ethical climate flourishes can earn for the individual greater freedom of action, as well as intrinsic satisfaction. As Ayers and Clement point out:

. . . One can suppose that the person who is not entangled in a web of conflicting standards, not caught in the throes of unhealthy competition to out-achieve a peer, not overly concerned about pleasing a superior or accomplishing objectives at any expense, would be a more self-satisfied person, one who experiences less guilt, frustration, anxiety, boredom, and stress. One might also surmise that greater motivation, morale, and job satisfaction could be likely by-products of increased interpersonal trust generated by adherence to ethical standards.⁶

Professional Identity. The ethical payoff of professional commitment cannot come from inspiration alone. The services must recognize the importance of officer career management and family welfare needs in maintaining the individual's commitment to military service. Measures to provide greater stability of tours, fulfill personal needs, and enhance use of professional skills can promote a healthier ethical climate by making officers feel they are regarded as essential members of a team and treated accordingly.

There is also a need to place renewed emphasis on those factors that enhance the officer's pride in military professionalism and that serve as reinforcement of his feeling of uniqueness as an officer. Some measures that may be considered include:

1. Emphasis on development of professional competence in specialty areas. This may include means of testing, such as written exams.
2. Upgrade academic standards at all service schools.
3. Provide means of eliminating officers who do not measure up to the expected ethical standards of the profession.
4. Institute exchange programs of unit to unit, service to service, and even military to civilian sectors, ranging from one day to one year.
5. Expand professional journals to provide forums for exchange of ideas and expertise in all speciality areas.

Professional/Bureaucrat Conflict

In Chapter III, we discussed the strains that are inherent in a professional officer's situation within the confines of a bureaucratic organization. These strains present various ethical dilemmas that, in most cases, cannot be avoided. The first step in dealing with them is simply to understand their nature in order to avoid them when possible. The second step is to devise accommodating mechanisms to lessen their impact when they cannot be avoided.

Statistical Indicators. Perhaps the greatest complaint, when it comes to describing the organizational influences constraining conduct, is the misuse of statistical indicators to produce, in effect, false reports. The sophistication of

the modern military establishment, along with the existence of data processing technology, creates an ever-increasing tendency toward status reporting by statistical indicators. It is too easy, however, to misrepresent situations through abstract symbols that can never replace personal observation of actual conditions. There is no adequate substitute for leaders who personally check the true status of men, equipment and readiness. However, there are limitations on how far a commander can spread himself and understand the detailed workings of a massive complex environment. More important, there is the great physical distance between the headquarters requiring detailed information and the men that produce it. This results in inevitable strains on the lower levels to present accurate information, often coupled with demands to meet specific and uninformed quotas or standards. To compound the problem, the information is often used to evaluate those reporting it. As long as such information reporting is needed, the strains on integrity will exist. However, the following steps are recommended as means to reduce the adverse ethical impact:

1. Review all management information systems and related uses of statistical indicators to determine what pressures are created on those reporting to compromise their integrity.

2. Explore means of spot-checking accuracy of reported information without undermining trust and confidence. Treat all violations of integrity on official reports as any other violation under the UCMJ.

3. Eliminate, whenever possible, the use of undifferentiated statistical criteria and fixed quotas.

4. Divorce, as far as possible, the relationship of status reporting systems and unit or individual performance evaluations.

5. Disallow the use of statistical indicators in officer evaluation reports.

6. Review criteria for status report indicators to ensure measurement of effectiveness in meeting organizational missions, as well as efficiency in performing intermediate tasks.

7. Review status reporting systems to eliminate reporting of unnecessary information and confine reports only to the level that has a requirement for the information.

8. Emphasize use of self-help inspection teams that relay no status information beyond the commander of the unit inspected.

9. Reestablish emphasis on personal supervision and command involvement in verification of unit status reports.

Assessing Ethical Impact. So often, in trying to alleviate the strains on ethical conduct created by various procedures and policies, we tend to be reactive to the problem that exists already. We could save considerable trouble and possible damage if we were to assess in advance the adverse ethical impacts of policies before enacting them. The comparison has been made to the current environmental impact

analysis by suggesting that we institute measures in the form of "Ethical Impact Statements."⁷ Whether such considerations would take the form of written statements or implicit thinking processes, the idea is that every decision maker, every commander, and every staff officer alert himself to the potential of any procedural requirement to undercut the ethical behavior of the members of his organization. A particular decision may have worthy goals, but may place such a burden on individuals to compromise ethical standards that the value of the original purpose is overridden. In other instances, the goals of the decision may take precedence over the ethical impact. Nevertheless, just the process of considering the ethical pressures that could be caused could serve either as stimulus to adopt ameliorating changes in the policy, or to alert the decision maker to enact other measures to counter any adverse effects.

A suggestion from the business community to help in assessing ethical impacts would be the creation of an "ethical advocate's" role.⁸ This would involve a staff officer placed in a position in which he would examine policy decisions and regulations to assess the effect they would have on the ethical climate of the organization. The main caveat is that the commander should not use that position as a scapegoat to relegate all ethical concerns to the advocate. Emphasis on integrity must remain a command responsibility.

Professional Self-Regulation. The point has already been made in this study that the military profession must find ways to regulate its own ethical conduct; otherwise, outside regulation will be invited. Direct command action is the most effective means of influencing behavior within the military hierarchy. Frequently, however, unethical conduct is hidden from superiors while evident to peers and subordinates. An obvious solution would be for officers to report upon or counsel their peers whenever they observe improper behavior on their part. Nontoleration by peers certainly should be emphasized, but in practice, it is rare that one turns in his comrades for any but gross misconduct. Counselling between peers is more likely to occur; even verbal nonacquiescence to another's conduct can be quite effective. Some have suggested peer evaluation systems. No doubt, such reports could provide far more reliable evaluations than a rating scheme by superior alone. However, there are insidious side effects to such a practice: namely, the acrimonious and destructive competition that could result among peers who should be cooperating toward common unit goals.

Other suggestions to facilitate professional self-regulation have centered around the need for some kind of "whistle blowing" mechanism whereby there is a means for individuals to be heard when they observe improper conduct or nonadherence of seniors or peers to the designated missions of the organization.

Vice Admiral William P. Mack has spoken out on the need for permitting dissent within the Navy, meaning within the system.⁹ He says that many of the mistakes of Vietnam could have been avoided had counteropinions been heard. The kind of dissent he talks about is really good communications. He believes that objections should be voiced internally and through the chain of command. This also means that seniors should listen to subordinates and create a climate in which expression of opinions is encouraged. Then, once one has spoken up loud enough to be heard, he must comply with whatever lawful and moral decision be made. Admiral Mack regards this need for upward communication as more important than ever; he sees a more complicated future with junior officers being thrust increasingly into moral issues.

Another suggestion has been to provide an alternative to the chain of command as a means of reporting unethical conduct. LTC Drisko, in his study, surveyed the attitudes of officers toward an outside channel.¹⁰ Those groups least favorably inclined toward such an alternative were those which normally are considered as comprising the power holders--senior officers, USMA graduates, males, and combat arms officers. Those groups normally outside the chain of command--namely, junior officers, non-USMA graduates, female officers, and combat service support officers--favored another channel through which to communicate, revealing that they felt helpless in dealing with ethical dilemmas through the chain of command. As Colonel Drisko observed:

. . . The differences in these groups as to the effectiveness of the chain of command dealing with reports of unethical conduct is significant, and deserves additional study on ways to reduce the divergence perceived between power holders and power recipients.¹¹

Some way must be found to resolve this "power holders"/"power recipients" dichotomy, as it affects the entire issue of trust and commitment to professional values. The inviolability of the chain of command must be regarded as sacred to military effectiveness, yet further study is needed to find ways to enhance subordinate commitment to a system of professional self-regulation.

Ethical conduct in the military profession also can be monitored at the very top of the hierarchy. Major General William M. Lynn, USA (Ret.), proposed, in 1971, the appointment of a five-man professional ethics board at Department of the Army level to be composed of both active and retired members.¹² He suggested that active members would contribute insights into decisions which affect them while the retired officers would add more detached and objective analyses. The board, as he proposed it, would be tasked to establish professional standards, oversee the adherence of the profession as a whole to its standards, and conduct independent attitude surveys and interviews. There is considerable merit to this proposal. Such oversight committees could serve as semi-autonomous agencies in each of the services. They could serve as focal points for monitoring service regulations and policies for ethical impacts and coordinating special studies and panels.

Most important, they would become the "conscience" of the profession, providing a continuing source of reaffirmation of traditional values and commitment to integrity.

Other Measures. In many instances among the services, matters regarding military professional ethics are treated in an off-handed manner as if there were no reason for concern. They are very often relegated to the chaplain's offices. As a result, there is little coordination of efforts to resolve ethical problems and, therefore, little perception of command emphasis. The Army has recently centralized all matters of ethics responsibility within the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Human Resources Directorate. The result should be a far more efficient effort to coordinate ethics instruction throughout all schools and commands and to communicate command emphasis from the top echelon of the Army. Another move being made in the same effort is the formation of a "living library" of experts on ethical issues impacting upon the military. The effort has begun with a series of conferences at DA Staff level to bring together the key personnel throughout the Army who teach or concern themselves in some way with the ethics problem. The idea is that the individuals not only share information on their experiences in instilling ethical behavior, but also form relationships to ensure a continued exchange of ideas in a rapidly changing environment.

Another measure that should be considered by all the services together would be to set up a mechanism whereby each service could share with the others its experiences with military ethical issues. At present, there is a great deal of creative groping as each service tries to deal with this problem. However, there is virtually no interchange of ideas taking place. There should be a means of bringing key people together both at service staff levels and among counterparts at various service schools.

CHAPTER IX

MILITARY PURPOSE, IDEOLOGY, AND ETHICS

Thus far in this study, I have discussed educational measures to foster a more thorough comprehension of the ethical dimensions of professional conduct. I have also proposed organizational and leadership changes that could promote more ethical behavior. Although those measures are important, the military professional's sense of purpose and place in society may be even more significant as a factor in strengthening his commitment to the ethical standards expected of the officer corps. In the former cases, the effort was to promote ethical behavior through awareness of the pressures that result in unethical conduct and measures to ameliorate the strains and dilemmas that are ever present in military life and in any human activity for that matter. What is more important is an officer's mental attitude toward resolution of those dilemmas. If he is dedicated to his profession, feels a sense of purpose about the profession of arms and justice in pursuing it, and feels that he is understood and appreciated by the public, he will more likely have the proper attitude. However, if he is confused about the role the military plays as an instrument of foreign policy and feels alienated from society, he will be more likely to draw into a shell of resentment, self-interest and self-righteousness. The result of such introversion could manifest itself in displays of self-centered careerism, militarism, misplaced loyalty, or general

disregard for the traditional commitment of service to the country.

In a 1971 article, General Gard said that the military profession is going through an "identity crisis." He also added that:

solutions to the dilemmas facing the military profession fall somewhere between two unacceptable extremes: returning to traditional professionalism, involving withdrawal from society; or discarding traditional values and severely impairing cohesiveness and discipline. Obviously, the two should be reconciled, but the prescription of preserving essential military values while maintaining a close relationship with civilian society is inordinately difficult.¹

The solutions are locked in a contentious combination of issues involving military purpose, ideology, relationship to society, and ethical concepts. These issues do not lend themselves to neat solutions or ready agreement. But they are matters that should be faced by the military profession and made a focus of continued debate.

Military Purpose

There are those who feel the military is in danger of losing its sense of purpose and combat ethics by too much mixing with civilian concerns. They recognize that the armed forces as a whole cannot be separated from society and, therefore, propose means of insulating only the combat forces. For example, Hauser proposes that the Army be divided organizationally into two parts, a "fighting army" and a "supporting army."² He recognizes that the Army cannot isolate itself

from society, but he feels "it must somehow do so in order to preserve its necessarily authoritarian nature." His solution involves enclosing the peculiarly military part of the Army within the administrative and logistics elements-- ". . . an isolation, so to speak, of the 'fighting army' within the whole army."³ Similar proposals have been made by Bradford and Brown⁴ for a "pluralistic" army consisting of a "combat" force and a "support" force. Another, by Toner,⁵ suggests a "tripartite" corps consisting of line officers of combat arms preserving the core military ethic, staff officers to provide logistics and combat support, and generalists or a "civilianized officer corps" of administrators, chaplains, doctors, lawyers and educators.

While these proposals may have some merit for differentiating essentially combat functions from the noncombat, they do little to solve the fundamental problem of clarifying the military ethic and resolving the confusion of military purpose. Even if we could insulate the military ethic within the combat forces, what about the rest of the military establishment? There is no lack of good reasons to preserve the dedication and identification of the military support forces, not the least of which is that many will encounter some of the greatest strains on integrity. Better yet, we should emphasize the corporate unity of all as members of the military profession. A seemingly more logical approach would be to return to the requirement, formerly practiced in the Army, that all service

support officers serve initial details of duty with the combat arms.

On the other side of the debate, some argue that trying to withdraw all or portions of the armed forces from society is escaping from the problem and would result in recruiting problems. Rosser⁶ argues that we must make the military more, not less, like 20th century U.S. society. He says the military now is too much "out of tune" with society and is clinging to outmoded traditions. He believes fusion is essential to gain the trust, value and respect of a democratic society and to gain adequate budgetary support. Sarkesian and Gannon contend that neither retreat into rigid and narrow professionalism nor assumption of a civil service role is the answer. They say the military profession must:

. . . develop a new rationale in which the military is seen as more than unconditional servants or simple paid employees of the state... (Rather it must) acquire political understanding and expertise, a sense of realistic and enlightened self-interest, and professional perspectives transcending boundaries that we have traditionally associated with duty, honor, and country.

They add that the fundamental ethical problem for the military is to accommodate itself to its growing volunteer character and reinforce its links with society, yet not lose its uniqueness as a profession:

Answers to these questions will not be found in more elaborate technology, increased military discipline, isolation, or aloofness from society, but in understanding the role the military plays in society and appreciating

the "politics" of democratic systems. This requires a commitment to the idea that the military professional is part of the American political system and civilian value structure.⁸

Sarkesian and Gannon are getting closer to dealing with the crux of the problem of the military profession's sense of identity. However, one must not focus too narrowly on the issue of political awareness. There are those who call for much greater emphasis on politico-military expertise⁹ because of the interaction of political and military aspects of national security policy and the frequent requirements for officers to provide advice to the civilian leadership. However, these requirements can be handled most competently by a small cadre of officers specifically trained in politico-military affairs. Also, it is granted that all senior officers will need politico-military awareness as they become involved in the top policy making positions. Again, this training should be provided as needed, preferably in civilian graduate schools.

The real need for the entire officer corps, however, is not for expertise in political science, economics, or international relations. The primary concern for every officer must remain in the mastering of his particular professional skill. Still, he does have an extra burden placed upon him. He must develop a sense of what it means to be a professional officer and of where he fits into American society. He cannot isolate himself and be merely a mercenary. He must appreciate the values of the society he protects and understand

the dimensions of national security policy and the role he is expected to play. As Sarkesian and Gannon put it:

Military professionalism must ultimately be grounded on the premise that military ethics converge with the ethical values of the larger society. A military system in a democratic society cannot long maintain its credibility and legitimacy if its ethical standards differ from the civilian values of the larger society...

The study of military ethics and civilian control, therefore, must examine the prevailing value system of civilian society with particular emphasis on the roles expected of the military, assess institutional norms of the military, and investigate the individual values of the professional officer... Equally important, we need to study political theory, philosophy, and history so that military men will understand and appreciate the dilemmas caused by the contradictions of conscience and institutional demands.¹⁰

The military professional today must face up to all this and even more. He must resolve his sense of injustice at being asked to prepare for military actions that do not pursue "total victory." Hence, the need is for awareness of the roles for which military forces can be used, the limitations on the use of force in resolving certain kinds of crises, and most important, the Clausewitzian concept of military force as an instrument of national policy. He should understand the political processes that allocate levels of support for the armed forces. This means appreciating the "guns vs. butter" concerns of the nation, civilian perceptions of threats to national security, and other factors that impinge upon national security (e.g., limited resources, inflation, energy, balance of payments and ecology). A simple understanding of these

areas can help ameliorate the sense of alienation the officer may feel, as well as better prepare him as an advocate for the military position on the issues.

The Military's Relation to Society

During the early 1970s, a number of authors¹¹ commented on the alienation of the military from society by calling for the armed forces to perform public welfare roles such as disaster relief, engineering projects and medical services. Since that time, educational emphasis has shifted strongly in the direction of greater separation as the service schools have been dropping social science subjects and creating pure technical skills. Both approaches miss the real need of the military profession. The military establishment must accommodate itself to society as a military combat force, not as a convenient group to perform other socially useful projects. Civic action is fine, but only if it does not detract from military training and readiness. As Hauser points out, in spite of any civic roles, peacekeeping, or deterrence the military establishment is still in the "killing business." "It is neither by accident nor for the sake of convenience that trained combat units are chosen for such jobs."¹² It is the combat mission by which the military profession must identify itself to the public. But the answer also is not withdrawing into seclusion and pretending that the only role for the armed forces is to fight another World War II-style war. The

profession must make the effort to come to terms with societal values and national purpose without compromising its professional sense of uniqueness and corporateness. As Samuel Huntington has pointed out:

. . . In the end, the dilemma of military institutions in a liberal society can only be resolved satisfactorily by a military establishment that is different from, but not distant from, the society it serves.¹³

To clarify its place in society, the military profession must both solidify its professional military standing and confront the issues of societal relationships directly. For example, in the area of relations with the media, all of the indicators (surveys, articles, letters to editors of military publications) demonstrate deep hostility among military officers toward what is perceived as a blatant and unjust anti-military bias in the media. The typical response is to rail against the press, refuse to talk to reporters, or even to try to cover up information. A response more beneficial to the profession would be to learn to put across a better image about military activities and missions. One noteworthy effort in this direction is the annual Naval War College "Military and the Media" Conference. Students and prominent media personnel confront each other in an intensive two-day session addressing the issues of media coverage of the military and the role of the adversary press. The dialogue often gets bitter as the students finally get a chance to confront the alleged perpetrators of their "bad" public image. On the surface, the results

seem to be that the students get a number of complaints "off their chests," and the media personnel may get the message that some of them may, in fact, have misrepresented the whole picture. However, in a seminar discussion during the 1978 conference, a more fundamental observation was made.¹⁴ One of the media representatives, after hearing so much of the allegations of press bias, contended that the problem seemed really to be a strong sense of frustration on the part of the officers. He alleged that the officers were really expressing a deep sense of resentment over having been sent to fight a war with inadequate political and moral support and had subsequently been blamed by the public for consequences for which they were not responsible. He observed also that the officers deeply resented the fact that some members of their own ranks had, indeed, tarnished their image and had cast doubts throughout the nation about the moral fiber of the military profession. He defended the media by stating that it is in the nature of a free press that the bad news gets printed first and that the media should not be made the "whipping boy" for the problems that exist elsewhere.

The lesson of that exchange is that the problems do exist elsewhere. Those problems can best be resolved not by seclusion and alienation of the military profession, but by such confrontations over the issues that seek understanding both within the military and with the public. The profession must first start by seeking an understanding of the problems that

alienate it from society and then making a much greater effort to improve its public image in order to gather the support and moral reinforcement it deserves from the public. Needless to say, the military profession is not going to reverse all the antimilitary attitudes in the society, but it can benefit significantly from clarifying its own place in society and seeking a dialogue for better mutual understanding with the public.

Developing a Military Ideology

There are those who feel that simply developing an understanding of where the military fits in with society is not sufficient to resolve its moral crisis of purpose. There remains an ideological vacuum left by the unresolved questions of what this nation stands for in international areas, the legitimate role for military force, and the role the military itself should play in the society and the policy making process. Janowitz anticipated part of the problem nearly two decades ago when he wrote:

. . . the growth of the military establishment into a vast managerial enterprise with increased political responsibilities has produced a strain on traditional military images and concepts of honor. The officer is less and less prepared to think of himself as merely a military technician. As a result, the profession, especially within its strategic leadership, has developed a more explicit political ethics.¹⁵

The problem is that the military establishment has not been able to develop an adequate political ethic to reestablish

its just place of honor in the nation. One approach is to bring US defense policy morally in line with objectives with which the nation can identify.

Toner suggests that US defense policy be founded not merely upon what is expedient, but also "upon an ordered conception of what is ethically required, for that, in essence, is what makes American society worthy of protection."¹⁶ He advocates that the military identify the defense of the nation with the protection of the fundamental values that give meaning and purpose to the nation's existence. He sees the military's sense of satisfaction to be an existentialist one, likening it to Albert Camus' conception of Sisyphus, a mythological figure condemned by the gods to forever push a rock up a hill, only to have it continually roll back down. Camus portrayed Sisyphus as finding consolation in the struggle itself toward the heights as a sufficient effort alone to find self-fulfillment. Toner compares the American soldier's existence to a similar struggle to try to solve the unsolvable problems of an imperfect world:

. . . Like Sisyphus, who was given a task destined never to be accomplished despite his most heroic efforts, democratic soldiers and nations must perpetually choose between those things which they must do if they are to satisfactorily discharge their responsibilities and those things which they cannot do if they are to satisfactorily preserve their *raison d'etre*.¹⁷

Toner's prescription for a military ethic really involves turning inward and finding satisfaction from adhering to pure

values in an imperfect world. In a different perspective, Stackhouse¹⁸ advocates drawing closer to societal values by identifying the military purpose with the traditions of the moral and religious heritage of the country. He believes the ethic of the professional military must reflect "the common moral sensibilities of civilization as embedded in the law..." In order to cope with an antimilitary mood of the country, the military can only gain true respect "by making clear and operational what is worthy of honor...". The basis for military values, according to Stackhouse, must inevitably be drawn from motives of the "Judeo-Christian traditions which have shaped the West and from the canons of international law painfully developed over centuries."¹⁹ Drawing from the two-edged obligations of love of neighbor and defense of justice, he would define the primary purpose of the military as "the establishment, enforcement, and preservation of a just peace." Such an ethic would require a "more subtle understanding of economic democracy...required to understand contemporary events and the kinds of roles that the military may be called upon to play in the future." Under this proposition, the military profession would:

. . . begin to explore the ways in which economic democracy is an extension of the values of political, social, and legal justice that leads to genuine peace... When a multidimensional understanding of democratization is included, as a part of justice, in the definition of peacemaking and peacekeeping functions of our military forces, there is something to profess that is worthy of loyalty, sacrifice, and service. Both at home and abroad, the chief bearers of American Power become symbols of honor.²⁰

Chaplain Kriete takes a similar approach by contending that the successful conduct of war requires the "mobilization of a moral consensus on the legitimacy of both the objectives of violence and the means by which these objectives are pursued."²¹ According to Kriete, the Vietnam War illustrated the powerful influence of public support on the outcome:

. . . So far, Communist strategists appear to have learned better than we, that the moral dimension of strategy is changing the value of international conflict. That conflict is no longer a purely governmental affair.²²

He notes that in Hannah Arendt's view:

. . . the revolutionary cause of freedom is the only one which can justify the prosecution of violence in the minds of most of the people who are called on to fight wars. Counterrevolutionary enterprises, on the other hand, require commitment to values that are essentially repressive and quite contrary to our own dominant ideas of freedom and equality.²³

Kriete draws further from Reinhold Niebuhr and Arendt to point out:

. . . that political violence, in the form either of war or revolution, requires for its successful pursuit the mobilization of a moral consensus on the legitimacy of both the objectives of violence and the means by which these objectives are pursued.²⁴

Kriete does not make light of the difficulty involved in mobilizing national commitment to the legitimacy of strategic objectives. But he sees it as absolutely essential that military strategists develop military aims to support political

purposes that are consistent with American cultural and moral values.

The process of developing a sense of military purpose consonant with American values and worthy of mobilizing public support will involve a cooperative dialogue within the national security policy making process and an extensive study effort within the military profession. The impetus should begin in the war colleges to clarify further the issues and dilemmas of military purpose that have been identified above and to explore the avenues open for the future direction of the profession.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

Once we dare to explore the ethical issues that touch us all so deeply, we encounter strong pressures to provide a solution to get us out of that morass of dilemmas and strains. Yet there is no simple solution to the problem of professional military ethics. It is not reducible to a set of independent causes that can be corrected in an efficient manner. Therefore, I have no recipe of answers. Actually, as I see it, comprehension of the problem is the major part of the solution.

This study is a "think" piece. It is not designed to give approved solutions. My objective is to make the reader think about the many issues involved in this subject. I have tried to make him understand the subtle factors that influence personal ethical behavior and what his part is in shaping the ethical climate of his organization. This understanding can best be achieved through a reflective reading of the study and applying the issues to particular organizational and personal situations. I have not identified all possible issues that affect the integrity of the officer corps, but I have addressed the major aspects of military life that influence the conformity of officers to the ethical standards of the profession.

In spite of the many current efforts to place the blame for unethical behavior on scapegoats of shifting morality,

civilianism or entrepreneurialism, the problem goes much deeper. We can find the sources of the problem in a variety of causes: these include both the societal and military environment, certain strains arising from the dual roles of professional officer and career bureaucrat, and the ethical climate created in the organization itself. The officer is further influenced by certain inherent strains between the military and society, corruptions of the profession's pursuit of the "military way" vs. "militarism," and his interpretation of the military profession's purpose and place in society. Finally, the analysis rests upon the professional officer himself--his personal integrity, sense of dedication, and understanding of his responsibility for setting the example for subordinates and for not tolerating unethical practices among his fellow officers.

Another finding of note is that the offender usually is not the morally corrupt individual who blatantly abuses his official position. That kind of individual likely will be exposed and expelled from the officer corps. The problem more frequently and more subtly results from the sincere individual who works with determination toward accomplishment of his military duty, but in his overzealousness fails to comprehend the ethical impact of his actions, attitudes and example upon others. He may unwittingly be the author of the organizational procedures and climate that result in outcomes prejudicial to compliance with professional ethical standards.

Maybe we should be asking what it is that makes things right within the profession. We can become too preoccupied with manifestations of unethical practices and unprofessional conduct and lose sight of the fact that, in spite of all the pressures to deviate, there are many examples of unselfish, honest and dedicated professional behavior. I believe the level of ethical conduct in the military today probably is no worse than it has been during most periods of our history. There have been two changes to exacerbate the extent of unethical practices that do exist. One involves the increased visibility of individual conduct, not only through media attention, but also through increased mobility between and within assignments and the increased flow of information provided by new technologies. The other factor is a greater than ever need for integrity within the officer corps. We are dealing at lower levels with more sophisticated, more expensive, and more lethal equipment, along with more controversy and confusion about their employment. There are more variables in our organizational procedures and in our strategy and tactics. As a result, we have less leeway to tolerate unethical conduct. There is good reason to be indignant about nonadherence to professional standards even if the situation of officer conduct may be no worse, or possibly even better now, than in the past.

I have offered in the preceding three chapters a program to renew the standards of professionalism and integrity within the officer corps. Some of the recommendations I made are specific. For others I gave general guidelines along which more specific measures can be developed for particular service and organizational situations. These measures can take us only so far toward a solution of the ethics problem. The most effective results will come from raising the insights of the officer corps into the conditions and organizational factors that create the pressures to compromise personal integrity. Such an approach depends on the commitment of the leadership of the services to promoting the standards of professionalism of the officer corps. It also depends upon an enlightened educational approach by all service schools to develop understanding of the problems addressed herein. Most of all, the answer will come from the officer corps itself. It is that professional body which has expressed the concern about the problem of ethical conduct. It will be up to them to renew the tradition and spirit of integrity, dedication and service embodied by the military ethic.

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education on ethical issues, amelioration of organizational strains and dilemmas, and clarification of professional purpose, ideology, and ethics.

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